



See Cond.

Headpiece of a Slab from Tikal. Basle Museum.



THE  
**SACRED MAYA STONE**  
OF MEXICO  
AND ITS SYMBOLISM.

BY

FRANCIS PARRY,

*Late Member of the Legislative Council, Hong Kong; Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society.*

WITH EIGHT PLATES AND NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE TEXT.



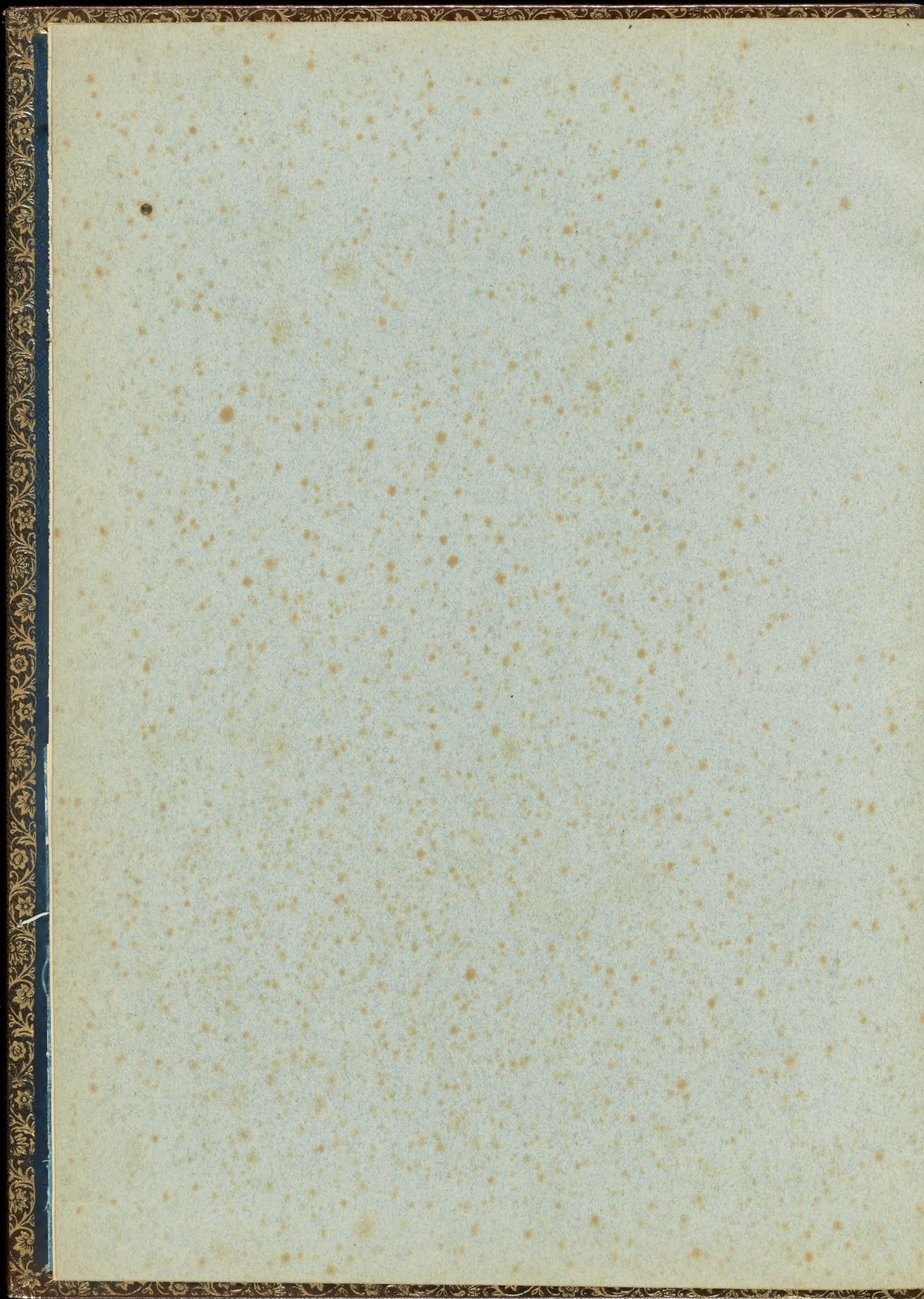
THE PUMA OF QUIRIQUA.

London:

DULAU & CO., 37, SOHO SQUARE.

1893.





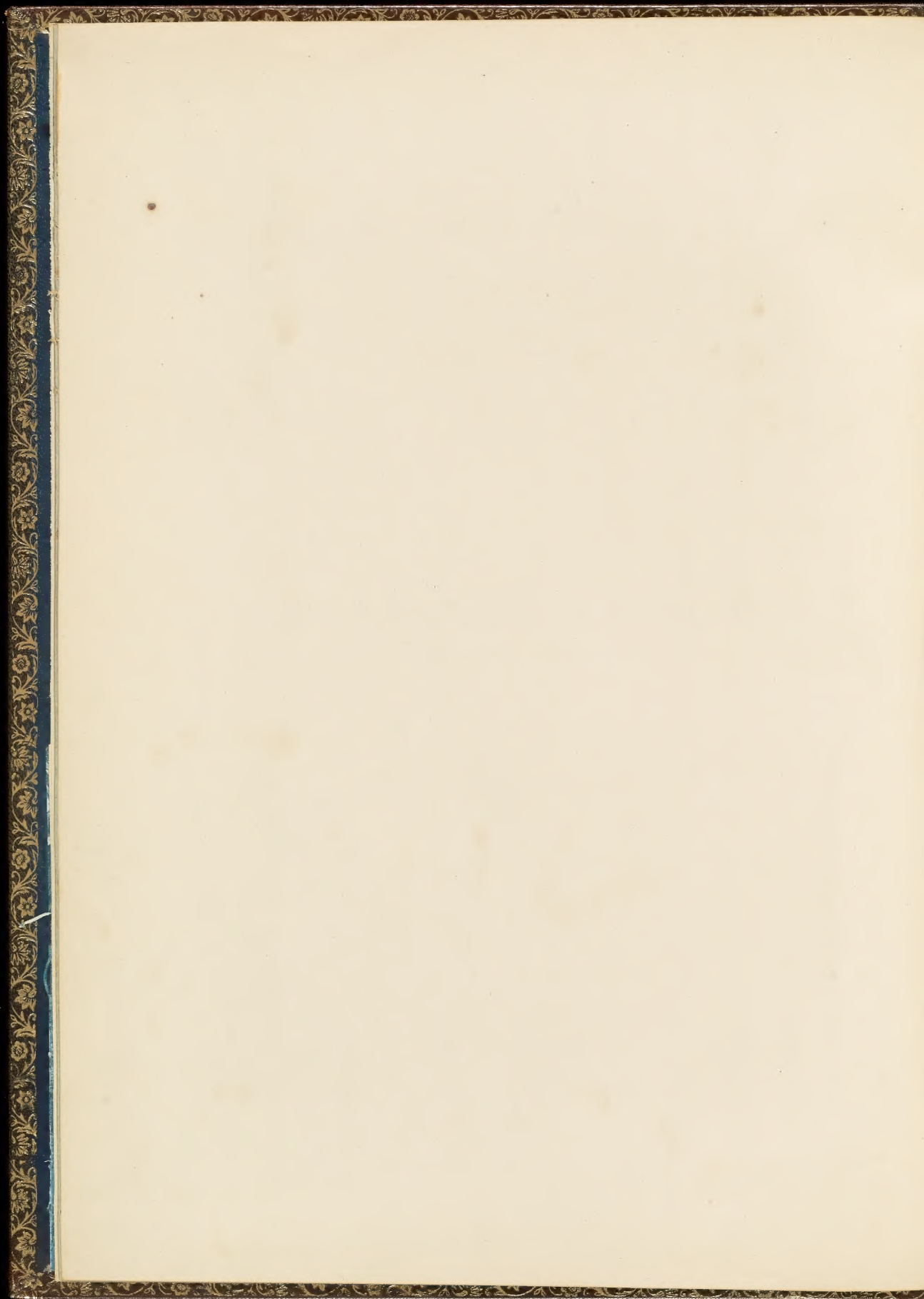


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THE SACRED MAYA STONE OF MEXICO

*AND ITS SYMBOLISM.*



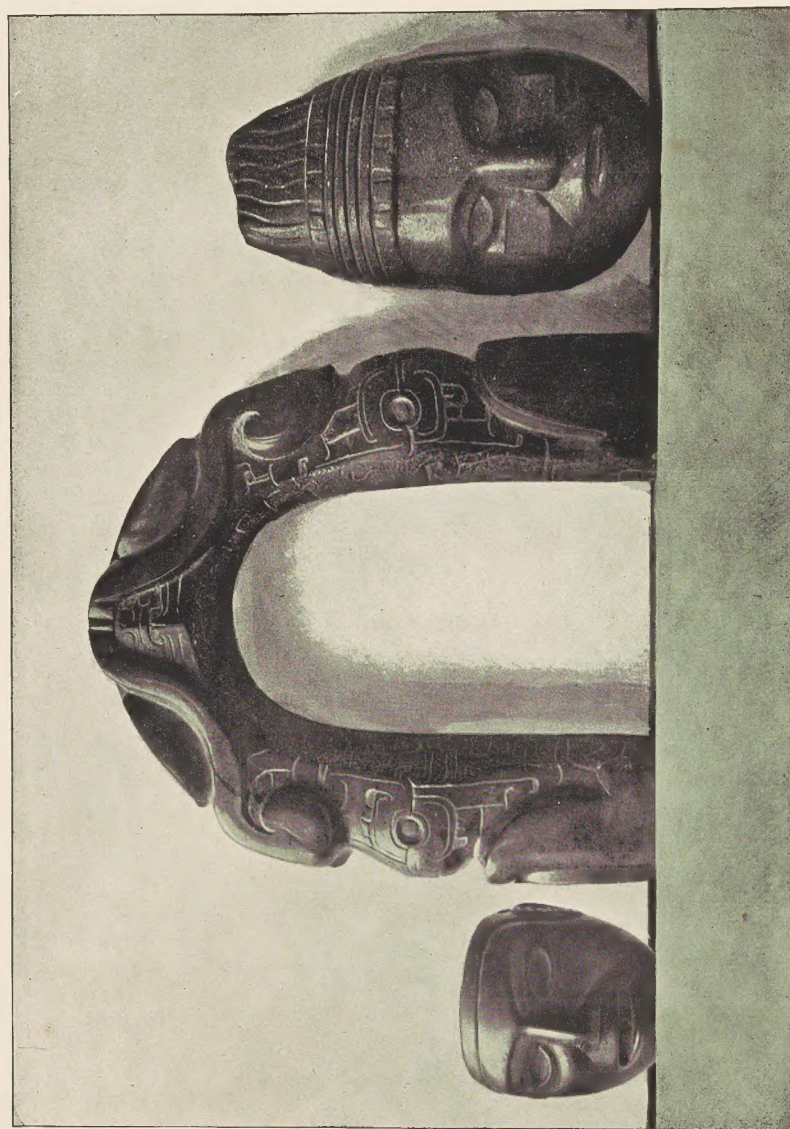








*Frontispiece.*



THE SACRED STONE OF THE FIVE DEITIES, IN THE NATIONAL MUSEUM, MEXICO.



Handpiece of a Slab from Tikal. Berlin Museum.



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217

LONDON.

WITHERBY AND CO., PRINTERS,

326, HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.





The Initial Glyph of the God of the Air.

*How vapours turned to clouds obscure the sky,  
And clouds dissolved the thirsty ground supply.*

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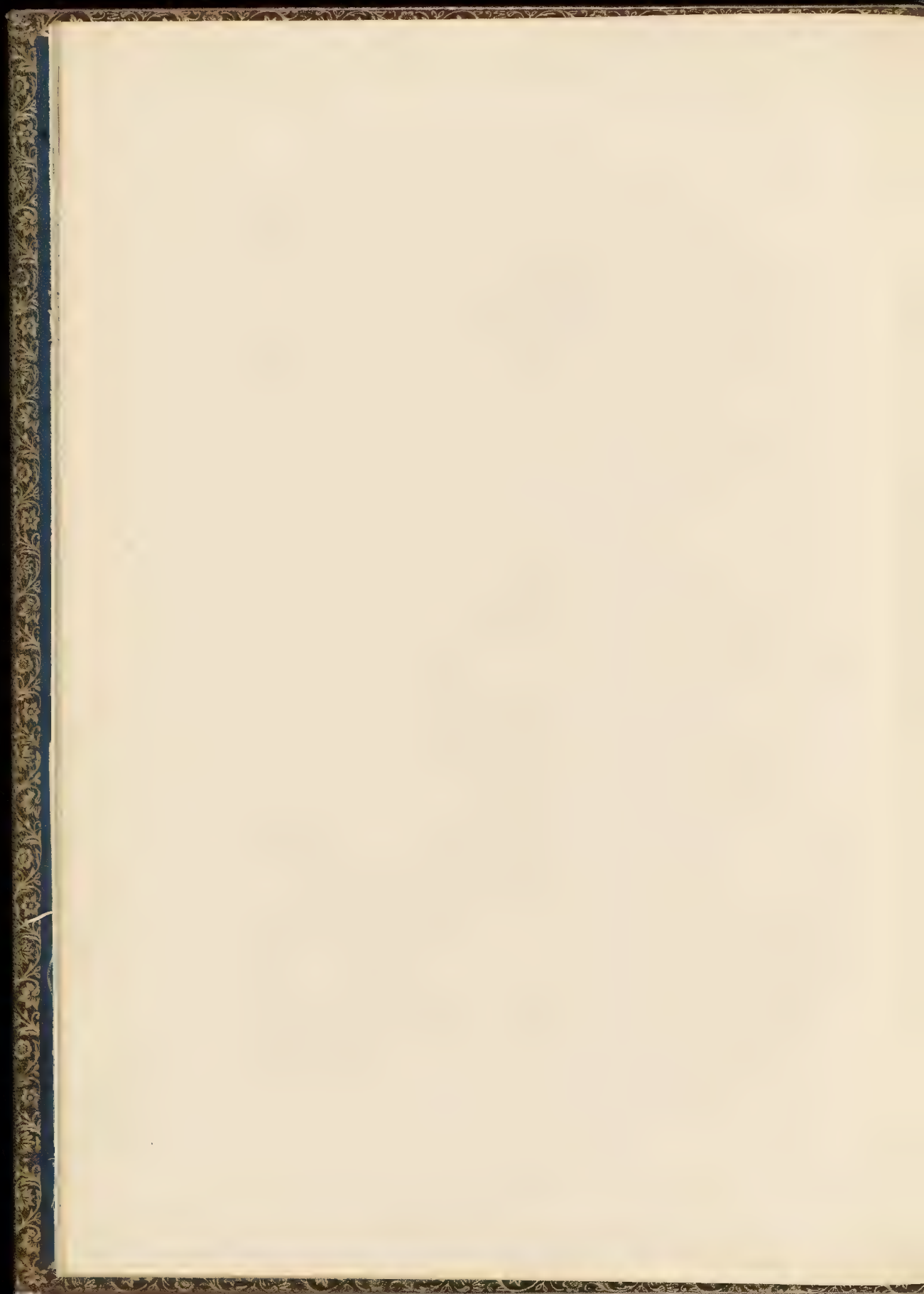
*From the middle of the world  
The sun's prolific rays are hurled ;  
'Tis from that seat he darts those beams  
Which quicken earth with genial flames.*

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*See dying vegetables life sustain,  
See life dissolving, vegetate again :  
All forms that perish other forms supply,  
(By turns we catch the vital breath and die,)  
Like bubbles on the sea of matter borne,  
They rise, they break, and to that sea return.  
Nothing is foreign ; parts relate to whole ;  
One all-extending, all-preserving soul  
Connects each being, greatest with the least ;  
Made beast in aid of man, and man of beast ;  
All served, all serving ; nothing stands alone :  
The chain holds on, and where it ends unknown.*

POPE.







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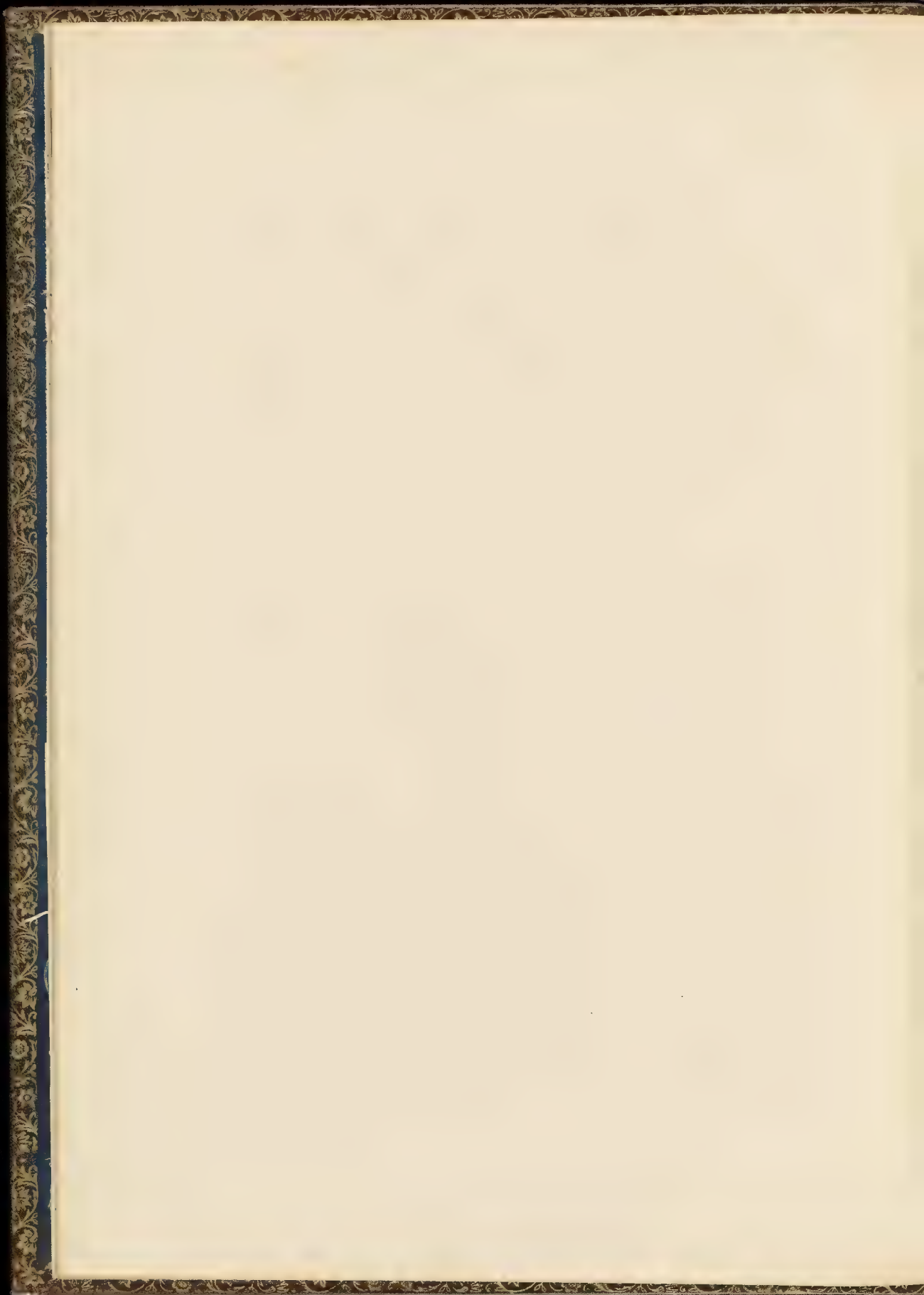
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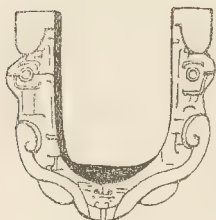
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Stone No. 58, National Museum, Mexico.

## THE SACRED MAYA STONE AND ITS SYMBOLISM.

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### CHAPTER I.

PROGRESS in the matter of giving to the scientific world the true meaning of the mysterious carved monuments of ancient Mexico has been so long delayed that we almost despair, fearing this attempt to unveil it may not gain general acceptance and be ranked as unsuccessful, and become consigned to the limbo of the many failures which have hitherto attended all efforts to produce a well-formulated conception of the groundwork of the religious sentiment of Central America, or of the writings of a priesthood who were the centre and life of an active civilization, held powerful position, sustained belief in their sacerdotal mysteries, built up a system of government, art, and letters, leaving their traces in the ruins of the huge temples they constructed, whose sculptured combinations of grotesque forms and undecipherable hieroglyphics have excited the interest of antiquarians since the period of the conquest of Mexico by Spain.

The explorers and historians of that time, being earnestly engaged in the propagation of the Christian faith, consigned all else to a secondary place, holding other creeds to be little worthy of consideration or study. They recorded some facts, but provided no materials that can be formed into a satisfactory sketch of the past history of the country, or that can be added to, as they caused the ancient writings to be destroyed for the most part, the few that escaped being still but partially understood, and they are divided into two groups. There is, therefore, left to us much to do before we can penetrate the obscurity enveloping a paganism which the Conquistadores conceived it to be their duty to demolish, as the bequest that has come down to us consists of a tangled mass of information intermingled with monkish theories and rhapsodies. A separation of these as an aid to the elucidation of the ancient mysteries has often been attempted. Our countryman, Lord Kingsborough, though doing important work more than half a century ago, in collecting materials for future use, being imbued with a desire to discover many analogies in Mexico according with Jewish history and the records of the Old Testament, took a course which did little towards reaching a solution of the hidden meaning of the mysticism



of the ancient beliefs. The comparisons made, however, show religious evolution to have been in some respects similar in the Eastern and Western hemispheres, without intercommunication having taken place between those far separated points.

The occupation of Mexico by the French, and the appointment of a special mission, of which the Abbé Brasseur de Bourbourg was a conspicuous member, gave hope of the accomplishment of serious work. Nevertheless, as in the case of his predecessors, a fixed notion as to the method of deciphering the manuscripts which was abortive took possession of the abbé, and, notwithstanding his admitted ability, this has for a time unfairly cast a shadow over his other excellent work. The theory of the formation of the Central American continent, a legendary narrative, he sought to prove to be confirmed by his translation of the MSS. Troano, made with the assistance of what was supposed to be a Maya alphabet. This attempt excited attention and criticism; finally, the whole was rejected as incorrectly rendered, as the precious document, being partially read by other sinologues, was shown to be connected with religious observances, feast days, and the like. The important error had been an incorrect arrangement of the order in which the hieroglyphics should be read.

However, while thirty years ago few persons were found engaged in this field of research, a legion are now at work. In England, France, the United States of North America, Germany, and Mexico, societies with professors, students, travelling members and a funded income are peering into the innermost recesses of ancient Mexico; consequently, anyone entering the controversial arena will have to submit to a severe scrutiny, and perhaps discouragement.

This occurred when the views to be embodied here were privately submitted to the inspection of good critics. Certainly, what was shown them was a first glimpse, and there were enigmatical and obstructive points connected with the theory put forward; but when further investigation had been prosecuted, they assumed a form in conformity with the first idea, and permitting as they do of an extended view into the past religious history of a part, and that the most ancient, of Mexico, the result is given to the public as a contribution to general knowledge, which it is hoped will serve as a step towards a desired goal—namely, an unfolding of the hidden purport of the most interesting undeciphered stone records of ancient times, that remain as yet as a sealed book.

This essay will in some respects be a history of a stone, an object familiar to archæologists, and of which examples may be seen in the principal museums of all countries. It will in the first place be considered as it was when seen in the city of Mexico, where the ideas regarding it had birth, as fortunately a stone in the National Museum there has qualifications suitable to enable it to do service as the keystone of an argument. Concerning a group of these rubbed or carved stones, there is in the translated Mexican official catalogue a description which is rather misleading; still, it seems to have been widely accepted, and sets forth that these relics were probably connected with Aztec sacrificial rites. It reads thus: "Yokes or collars that served in human sacrifices by placing them under the back of the victim to make the chest protrude, and thus facilitate the extraction of the heart, or by applying them upon the necks of victims to produce asphyxia or at least to obtain immobility. These yokes are found in Mexico, Tlaxcala, Orizaba, and Chiapas."

Dupaix and other authors with the learned societies have, in the absence of a better classification or explanation of their use, permitted this description—a conjectural one—to remain without question; while much thought has been directed to the consideration



of the, in some instances, profuse ornamentation of the stones, which forms a strong contrast to the plain condition of others. But as no definite conclusion has been reached, the subject remains open for discussion, and an account may yet be written of their use and of their significance.

The President of the Anthropological Society of London, who visited Mexico many years ago, has stated in a book of travels "that the so-called yokes were put over the wrists and ankles of the victims to hold them down on the sacrificial stone"—without, however, mentioning from whence this precise and circumstantial information as to the mode of their employment was obtained.

The illustration at the head of this chapter is of one of these stones, which is No. 58 in the National Museum of Mexico, and a cast of it is in the Trocadero collection in Paris; the cast is deficient in the matter of the omission of glyphs on the end of the butts. This specimen possesses several features to be hereafter pointed out, and in respect of being decorated occupies a middle position between the plain and the ornate examples; it will form the theme of this discourse, it being a representative specimen of the whole series of stones in the possession of scientific associations, their dimensions varying little.

A new phase of the subject will be entered upon, and the old theories, though holding a prescriptive right to respect, are challenged—because the stone has not weight sufficient to be employed in holding the victims pinioned and prostrate; its use as a sacrificial stone over which a victim was bent is unlikely, as, for such a purpose, it would have to be placed deep in the earth or attached to a larger stone. The stone does not exceed eighteen inches in height and could not have been sacrificially used when partially buried, and there being no trace of setting in masonry it is no doubt a special stone of some interest, as the pointers are carved at the butts with hieroglyphics and profiles in several instances, and it has been found interred with the remains of chief personages.

Moreover, we are informed as to the form of the Aztec sacrificial stone by the Spanish historians who, with Cortes, saw and described it; also the testimony of the ancient picture writings being in accord with their statements, it is established to have been a plain breast high column, rounded at the top, on which the victim was placed outstretched by assistants who held the arms, legs and head, the latter kept down by a curved wooden neck holder, passing under the chin, and grasped on either side.

The appellation of yoke applied to the stone is not shown to have had a traditional or a historical source, no one attempting to show by records or report that anciently such a custom as its use prevailed; consequently, there is no doubt it was given because the term was appropriate to the form.

Of nomenclature, without reference to use, another notable instance is found in the arrangement of the Latimer collection of rubbed stones of prehistoric times in the museum at Washington, consisting of twenty-seven from Porto Rico and other islands in the West Indies; the early examples are almost circular, while the more artistic of a later period, being of the form, are called horse-collars, and are supposed to have encircled the necks of dead chieftains—a surmise based upon the shape which may be far from aiding to the discovery of the truth regarding them.

At any rate, it can be shown that reasons exist for endeavouring to set aside the names given to the Mexican collar, and this being so, it will take the name of the Sacred Maya Stone in this narrative.

The doubt attaching to its ancient use leaves ample room for further inquiry regarding



its place in the religious worship of the past, and it may be well to take note that there is a void to be filled, as the districts in which the ruins of the chief Maya temples are situated have throughout yielded but a small number of figures or idols notwithstanding the certainty of the former existence of shrines with buildings attached for priests and women, and of the resort of crowds of devotees to these sacred places—evidence of the existence of a well-rooted belief we think symbolically expressed in this stone.

The early Spanish records, for the most part, do not yield a minute description of the religion peculiar to the tribes south of the country; more particularly, omission is made of those far removed from the actual centre of the Aztec sovereignty. It is evident, however, it was to a great extent a nature worship, debased and brutalized at the time of the advent of the conquerors, and they used strenuous efforts to eradicate it root and branch; consequently, of the idols, the less bulky forms are conspicuously wanting—no doubt they were destroyed, and the small wooden effigies said to have been made of cedar were burnt. But this determination to supersede heathen rites by a superior system of worship does not altogether account for the absence of large dethroned stone idols among the vast ruins of the more ancient temples: had they existed, many must have escaped destruction in this the country of the Mayas, for even in the centre of the Aztec territory, where Cortes and the Inquisition held sway, idols, sacrificial and calendar stones have been found that at present perform an important part in bringing vividly before us the rites and ceremonies of the great temple of the city of Mexico.

The paucity of sculptured stone idols and the fact of monoliths having been thrown down in the quadrangles at Palenqué, Cholula, and other places, led to a reflection as to whether any less large stone of a phallic character had existence and held a place within the walls of the sanctuary, that is, in the chamber or chambers usually occupying the summit of the pyramids. If a smaller stone had held a prominent or chief position, there was a probability of finding it. Where was it likely to be?

It was not in the museums of Mexico, and the collections of other countries made no mention of it; therefore to search there on ground so well known, on a beaten path, was of no avail, unless the hypothesis respecting the yoke was wrong, and this stone might be discovered to be of another order than that assigned to it; yet it suggested nothing in the required direction, standing with arched back as though defiant of criticism.

The doubt attaching to its classification was, however, not slight, and so it was pondered over, and on being turned over bodily for inspection, although it bore no resemblance to any other carved stone associated with Central America, it seemed to the writer to be an emblematic combination, having the religion already named for the principal feature and base. Could this be demonstrated, then there had been misapprehension in the museum classification, and the time had come when it would occupy a better place in prehistoric history, and be rescued from a false position.

The fact is it had, so to speak, been standing on its head from the time of its falling into the hands of the scientists, for the reason that thus an upright exhibition was obtained; in this manner it was easily placed in show cases with other objects, and, What were the pointers for if not to perform the part of supporters or legs?

The misadventure of being seen from a wrong point of view has, therefore, been the drawback, preventing this relic being rightly suggestive of its origin. Place it as shown on the first page, then the bow ceases to convey the supposititious idea of a sacrificial yoke; the pointers may be shoots of a vegetable form, as well as another type of nature worship,

the helm-like protuberance with an eye has a serpent-like appearance, the lower figure is of an outline resembling the horns of an insect, while the extreme base has a head of a proportion larger than the rest.

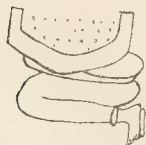
Here are enigmas to which no clue has been found; still, having consecrated the stone by conferring upon it a sacred name, it is requisite to proceed to a demonstration of its properties, and adduce something like sufficient evidence of its ancient character so as to obtain from the students of the Central American history their endorsement of the opinion that it was a stone of worth, not merely an object among the sacrificial instruments of the temple, used occasionally, but the corner-stone of a religious belief. Evidence favourable to the acceptance of a change of name can be forthcoming from deduction only, a manner of proceeding attended by innumerable difficulties, making the task weighty and the work peculiarly open to an adverse criticism.

The matter has been in part discussed before the Sociedad de Geographia y Estadística of Mexico, at a meeting of the Fellows held in February of the year 1891, when an analogy was drawn between the ancient religion of the Maya tribes and that of the Hindoos. The adoration of an emblematic stone was suggested, the absence of idols so numerous with the Aztecs, the rarity of sacrificial stones or altars was remarked upon and admitted; the number of priests, the existence of caste, and the employment of women, who were consecrated to the service of the temple and lived within its precincts, received also a passing allusion—but no identity with Asiatic religion was claimed.

Señor Batres, the Inspector of Historical Monuments, took a principal part in rebutting the new conceptions expressed, clinging to the old idea of a sacrificial use of the stone, and requiring an explanation of the profuse ornamentation of the more ornate specimens before changing the opinion recorded in the official list—the general opinion being in favour of the appointment of a sub-committee who were to report to the Society the result of further investigation of the subject. Nothing is known of its labours, except that two of the three members composing it withdrew.

Through the courtesy of Señor Rubino, Director of the Museo Nacional, who was disposed to admit that the old nomenclature might be inexact, a careful inspection of the six Maya stones under his care was permitted, he being present to the strengthening of his inclination to alter their classification, which, however, could not be done without the concurrence of Señor Batres.

Of these stones, one is worthy of particular notice, namely, that bearing the number 55, as it was attractive because specially suggestive of the true meaning intended to be conveyed, and likewise on account of its being of a normal type, without the later addition of ornamentation, and for this reason probably the oldest specimen of its kind in the museum. It is an archaic work of the unpolished period, roughly made of solid limestone, a block having been selected in which was imbedded a pebble well adapted to represent a head, and the workman, in its construction, brings it into position, making a second pointer, headless.



Nantzimlan, an Aztec name.



The Archaic form.

The space between the pointers has, probably, some relation to the "yoní" emblem, or there may be a meaning such as is understood in the Aztec hieroglyphic,—Nantzimlan, the upper part of which is a "sacred stone," slightly cut down, conveying the idea of "a place



of fruitfulness." This hieroglyphic is described by Penafiel as "Una especie de recepticulo lleno de puntos negros simbolo de la maternidad, la reproduccion, la fecundidad; debajo un medio cuerpo de mujer vestido, ya para indicar el sexo."

Having given examples of both the primitive and the ornamented Maya stone, it is advisable to anticipate an objection to the double emblems of the latter which may lead to the query "Why double?"

It is not possible with our present knowledge to explain the reason of this, but that it was employed as a double symbol in the sacred service of the temples is proved by reference to the historical data brought down to us in the story told by a carved stone from Palenqué. A fac-simile reproduction from an engraving "Lamina A" is to be found in the blue book issued lately by the Secretario de Justicia of the Republic of Mexico, which contains among other reports one of the date of the year 1889, on the smaller ancient archaeological specimens in the National Museum of the capital.\*

This relief represents a Maya priest kneeling, and, with his hands raised, presenting an offering of a tree-cross or tree of life. The head-dress of the figure is of the usual feathers, and a macaw's head—not a "quetzal" as Señor Batres would have it—with two large emblems conspicuously displayed on the head and left shoulder. This act of worship may have been before the stone which is now the subject of discussion. There is also in Case E, British Museum, an example in the head-dress of a small clay figure where the pointers are horizontally placed right and left.

To look for double examples of the symbol in other countries is not a vain search, as ancient Etruria furnishes them, and among the Roman antiquities of the museum at Avignon the duplex form is seen in bronze ornaments said to have been worn as pendants by barren women desirous of progeny, and in plate 85 of Fergusson's "Tree and Serpent Worship" the principal figure has a head ornament so much resembling the Mexican form, it might have been copied from the stone.

As to the Maya stone being "sacred" and an object of worship there is as yet no testimony except what is negative; that is, there have been few, if any, idols discovered in the Maya country, namely, among the ruins of Palenqué in Chiapas, Uxmal in Yucatan, and Copan in Honduras.

The American writer on Central America, Mr. H. H. Bancroft, Vol. IV. "Native Races," quotes from the writings of the most noted explorers of the Maya temples; drawing from that information the inference that nature worship had been established there from prehistoric times, and alluding to the absence of idols in all the ruined temples, says, "If there were any they must have been very small." Large monolithic stones are found in the centre of the courtyard of the chief temples, images of a like character were built into the structure of the buildings; there is, however, nothing from the interior of the Maya temples of the character of an idol standing apart as supreme. The temples contained some portable sacred emblem without doubt, and as these stones have been found near to the sites of sacred buildings, it may be further enquiry will lead to the discovery of their having been venerated and, therefore, should bear the designation provisionally given to them of "sacred Maya stones."

The lingam which finds a place in the *sanctum sanctorum* of a group of temples at Benares stands in the centre of the innermost chamber encircled by a barrier; crowds of devotees pass by, offering the sacred water of the Ganges and flowers; the stone

\* Library, Royal Geographical Society.

having no significance except to the initiated, it being as small as the Maya relic, and, consequently, might have been set aside as unimportant had it not been known in modern times—in fact, an American professor jokes about the Englishman who lived many years in India, and without inquiry into its antecedents, thought it strange that the natives should worship “a Jew’s harp sort of a stone.” Had it been a thing of the past upturned by the antiquarian, its import would never have been guessed, and there being few idols it would have been difficult to have traced the elements of the religion of the greater part of India.

History tells us of many instances of simple religious emblems becoming in the course of time profusely covered with ornamentation. The Maya stone is, therefore, not singular in being originally of a plain and suggestive outline, or in being partially changed when brought into combination with the serpent’s head and the so-called mastodon’s head. Even later, when the profile of a priest is added, and figures more or less ornament the length and it is further removed from the normal type, the original outline is but obscured, not lost.

This inquiry had progressed so far when an article on the subject of these stones from the pen of Herr Strebel, of Hamburg, was seen in the third volume of the “Archives internationales d’Ethnographie,” published in Leiden.

Herr Strebel is an authority on Mexican antiquities, and his exhaustive disquisition having been examined, together with the conclusions derived from his search through all available historical records for rejecting the classification of the stone as a yoke, it is interesting to find that he is a fellow-worker who coincides in this respect, and that by close investigation he has demolished the slight foundation on which the sacrificial theory rested, and a common sense view of the matter will eventually bring everyone to a like inference. But he propounds no new theory, leaving the general question of its use almost as he found it.

A Maya relic, and of considerable antiquity, having belonged in all probability to a primitive period prior to the Aztec era, the stone has been perpetually and erroneously associated with the comparatively recent archæological remains of Mexico, which led to a search for a solution of its mysteries in the Nahua picture writings, where it will be shown later on its component parts exist, not, however, visible unless approached by an ancient route.

“Aztec and sacrificial,” these words wrongly imposed have held us back from a correct comprehension of the situation, to the creation of a stumbling-block now, happily, to be removed.

Herr Strebel says, “Hätte das Steinjoch überhaupt eine Rolle bei denselben gespielt so würden wir fraglos in den hier angeführten älteren Autoren eine Andeutung darüber finden.” Faiths assume varied aspects during the historical periods, and especially do religious observances and ceremonies change in the course of ages; incredulity creeps in, ancient forms become partially veiled by a profusion of ornate additions; therefore the attempt to go back to a starting-point in the history of the Maya stone need not be abandoned because the Conquistadores overlooked it, and it may be, notwithstanding the obstacles encumbering the way, a right place may be found for it in the remoter history of the country.

Let us hope for a modification of the same writer’s idea that “Eine religiöse Bedeutung scheint mir deshalb unwahrscheinlich, weil sich dann in den Bilderschriften die doch vorwiegend religiösen Inhalts sind, Andeutungen dieses Zeichens finden müssten”; which having it must be presumed reference to the Aztecs can have no application to the religious observances of the Maya tribes and hieratic writings peculiar to their priesthood.

It has already been said that the simplest form, the normal type of the stone, should be the best foundation for a hypothesis respecting the ancient religion of the Mayas.



The theory of its use certainly started by a similarity being detected between it and a sacred stone in India: therein lay a danger which has caused many to go astray, that of attempting to force the materials which have to be dealt with into a foreign groove, and complete an examination of a relic well begun by a hasty collection of analogies from countries far away from Mexico. It has often appeared to be a speedy way of arranging the difficulties connected with the subject, resorted to by Kingsborough, Le Plongeon and others, enabling them to claim intimate acquaintance with the religious history of the ancient inhabitants of the world, and to obtain a reputation for erudition—the extent of their gain—as they wandered from the land where the material for a satisfactory solution lay, and taking devious paths, a right spirit of investigation left them.

The temptation to follow in their steps is great, more especially with respect to the second emblem of the Maya stone.

It will be a preparation for what follows to separate the combined emblems, naming them from the top of the stone downwards. First—the male principle of life; second—the female principle; third—the serpent; fourth—the vegetating seed germ; fifth—the mastodon's head.

The first and second have not been recognised universally; the third being frequently found of larger dimensions, its identity was undoubted; the fourth has been termed the fangs of a serpent, an inappropriate name when we know the channel through which the reptile's poison flows to be a tooth-duct; regarding the fifth, the general opinion is in favour of the name above given—because, it is stated, but not substantiated that the mastodon was worshipped and must be here represented; an opinion which will, it is trusted, fade away before the fresh ideas to be expounded.

The examination of the collection of stones under the care of Señor Rubino in Mexico was the result of a happy inspiration, as we were thereby brought face to face with the groundwork of the combined elements—the simplest, the least artistic form—which led to the conclusion that rather than attack the formidable hieroglyphics, the growth of ages, there was more prospect of success in the search for a clue if a lower position was taken, and an endeavour be made to get at the radicals of the Maya sacerdotal writings by an inquiry into the mannerism of the earliest symbols, as prehistoric rock scratchings, rubbed and traced unhewn stones, frequently have an affinity with the primitive picture writings of aboriginal tribes and the structure of their first hieroglyphics, and contain superstitiously preserved symbols, which, all history shows, often come down to us and are incorporated into the systems, the religious formalism of later days. The inquiry lay but in one direction for the starting-point, and was confined to the scant notes which fell into the hands of the *Mission Scientifique au Mexique* when in Spain, homeward bound. These notes, discovered among a pile of neglected papers, had been made by Landa, the first bishop of Yucatan, who reached the province A.D. 1541, and were attached to a manuscript known as the MSS. Troano, being inadequate in an attempt to translate the document, consisting in little more than the native signs for the days and months among the Maya tribes, but of their two-fold meaning little is known. Though the art of deciphering the old signs is partly lost, the vocabulary of the native language to which the Abbé de Brasseur applied assiduously during his residence in the country, comes in as an amplification of the bishop's memoranda, and is applicable in the first instance to the more prominent emblem of the "sacred stone"; in one of the signs he gives an early form, known to convey the idea of precedence, masculine priority, divinity and creative power.

The Maya signs selected for comparison with two of the emblems are capable of conveying in an equal measure the highest expression of supreme place and vitality, in their original application having reference to the Deity.

*Ahau*, in the Maya vocabulary, signifies "Creator, King," and is a representation in "hieratic" writing of the first and second emblems. To this sign the Abbé Brasseur de Bourbourg appends the remark:—*Ahau*, "dans la langue quichéenne offre, sous plusieurs rapports, une étymologie encore plus complète que dans la Maya. Il est non seulement la canne, le bambou, le signe du mâle dans le vase ou bien uni à la femelle, il est encore celui qui a repandu la semence dans le champ, le semeur, celui qui l'a fait croître et fructifier. '*Ahau*' était dans la plupart des langues de l'Amérique centrale, ainsi qu'au Yucatan, le titre souverain le plus ancien et le plus estimé."



The first and second emblems and "*Ahau*" being identical, the comparison tends to create a conviction, namely, that of the strong probability of the stone having been a sacred thing. This gains strength when another sign is analysed, and considered as bearing equal rank with the one mentioned already. The same authority alludes to it thus:—" *Yax*, comme symbole de la fécondité végétale par la similitude de son germ avec la membre viril," and in another instance it is said of it, "c'est ici le roi, le yonilingam." It took several forms derived from the most primitive, and was in relation with the more universally used sign of *Ahau*.



The French abbé's interpretation of these signs selected from the Maya manuscripts is not exceptional, and it is satisfactory to be able to state that many authorities in Europe, and Messieurs Cyrus Thomas and Brinton of the United States, with Professor Leon de Rosny are all in agreement with him on this point.

The vocabulary appended to the work entitled "De l'Interpretation des Ancient Textes Mayas," by Rosny, has words having for a radical the monosyllable *ah*, conveying the idea of sacred or chief in a masculine sense—

*Ah-menul*, createur; *Ah-aubil*, royal; *Ah-kin*, priest; *Ah-auintau*, regner; *Ah-kulel*, gardien des choses saintes.

A word which does not seem to have application to the name of the Deity in the most remote times is "*Ku*" dieu; it rather belongs to the time when polytheism had set in, or it may have been more often used by the Quichéens than the Mayas.

*Ah-au* has another application, *ah*, man, *au*, collar; it was a title conferred upon distinguished personages, who were also decorated with large stone necklaces as a mark of preferment.

"Essai sur le déchiffrement de l'Écriture Hieratique de l'Amérique Centrale," by the same author as the last-mentioned work, gives expression to the view that the worship of the creative principle had been founded in archaic times, the opinion being his compilation on the subject taken from the best sources of information. "De part et d'autre, on aperçoit, vaguement il est vrai, une deification supérieure et immatérielle qui semble avoir précédé la divinité solaire et tout le pantheon rattaché par la suite à cette divinité." The entire Section VII. of this essay is of the same tenor as this first extract, and, though incurring the risk of prolixity, further quotations from this writer must be given. "Dans la mythologie des Mayas nous trouvons tout d'abord une Être supreme et invisible, *Hunab-ku*, dont le nom signifiait 'le Dieu Unique,' et que l'on appelait également *Kinch-ahau*, 'l'œil du soleil.' Cette divinité identifiée parfois avec le soleil, me paraît être le même que *Baktum-Cham*, le Priape des anciens Yucateques, adoré jadis à Tihoo (Merida de nos jours) dans le magnifique



temple de Yahau Kuna, et le plus ancien des dieux Mayas. Le nom de ce Dieu a été interprété de plusieurs manières différentes; suivant un vieux vocabulaire il ferait allusion 'au phallus avec les attributs du sexe féminin.' Il serait de la sorte le Dieu de la vie et de la génération dans la nature. *Hunab-ku* présenté des analogies très frappantes avec le Tonacateolt de la mythologie mexicaine. Suivant le Codex Telleriano-Remensis, Tonacateolt est le 'Dios, señor, criador, gobernado de todo . . . el dios que dicen que hizo el mundo; y a este solo pintan con corona como señor sobre todos.'

From this extract it will be observed that the professor makes a cluster of names represent one and the same idol, though when translated their titles are distinct. That they were distinct yet ordinarily in combination will be shown.

*Yax* represented the rapidly growing shoot of the calabash or gourd, and was typical of vegetable life. *Ahau* took the precedence as man held the dominion, and power was with him and the animals to a degree not noticeable in the more silent life of the world; so this form and symbol was idolized, and, being set up as an object for adoration, a nature worship was established in Central America, to eventually become a prolonged polytheism, as the stone records of the ruined temples show, when, as doubtless took place early, it was united to other physical forces recognised as possessing influence and continuity.

There is no method of ascertaining the approximate date of this union, although Chavero in his work "Mexico a traves de los siglos" has a representation of an upright ancient stone bearing carvings of the third and fourth symbols, those of the serpent and the germ, the latter being "*Yax*," which will henceforth occupy a salient position in the religious history of ancient Mexico. On the "sacred stone" the symbol of vegetation is artistically



Cruz Serpiente. Chavero.

adapted to the available space, and is made to follow the contour of the object which it overlays, and is given the form of a seedling plant, though elsewhere and in the annexed figure it almost retains the written outline. The "sacred stone" therefore, being in affinity with the Maya hieratic writings in the matter of symbolism, stands out as a mammoth hieroglyphic, a polytheistic monument, embodying in its form the expression of the native idea of "the efficient cause, fecundity, natural force, the maker, creator, sovereign, lord."

The learned professor concludes that *Hunab-ku* was the Supreme Being, whose supremacy was apparently recognised in ancient not in mediæval times—in fact, the word translates differently, and is accepted by some as "the God of the creative hand," *nab* bearing that interpretation, and it may be a local and comparatively modern term, as Landa states there was a temple at Tihoo where a hand was worshipped; at any rate it is Quiché not of Maya origin. *Kinch-ahau* has nothing to do with the first emblem of the "sacred stone," which will be explained in due course, *ahau* being employed both as a prefix and a suffix to dignify the titles of deities, priests, and nobles; in varied manner it is liberally scattered over carved monuments as a symbol of rank, and as a hieroglyphic its changes are many upon the carved slabs of Palenqué, its three dots being much employed on all Maya sculpture. *Tihoo* is literally "the place of five," according with the number of the Maya deities grouped on the stone; but in one of the deities mentioned by Rosny more than the idol's name is given, as *Y-ahau-ku-na* reads, *y* he, *ahau* the chief, *ku* god, *na* his temple, or more freely, "the temple of the God of the living principle."

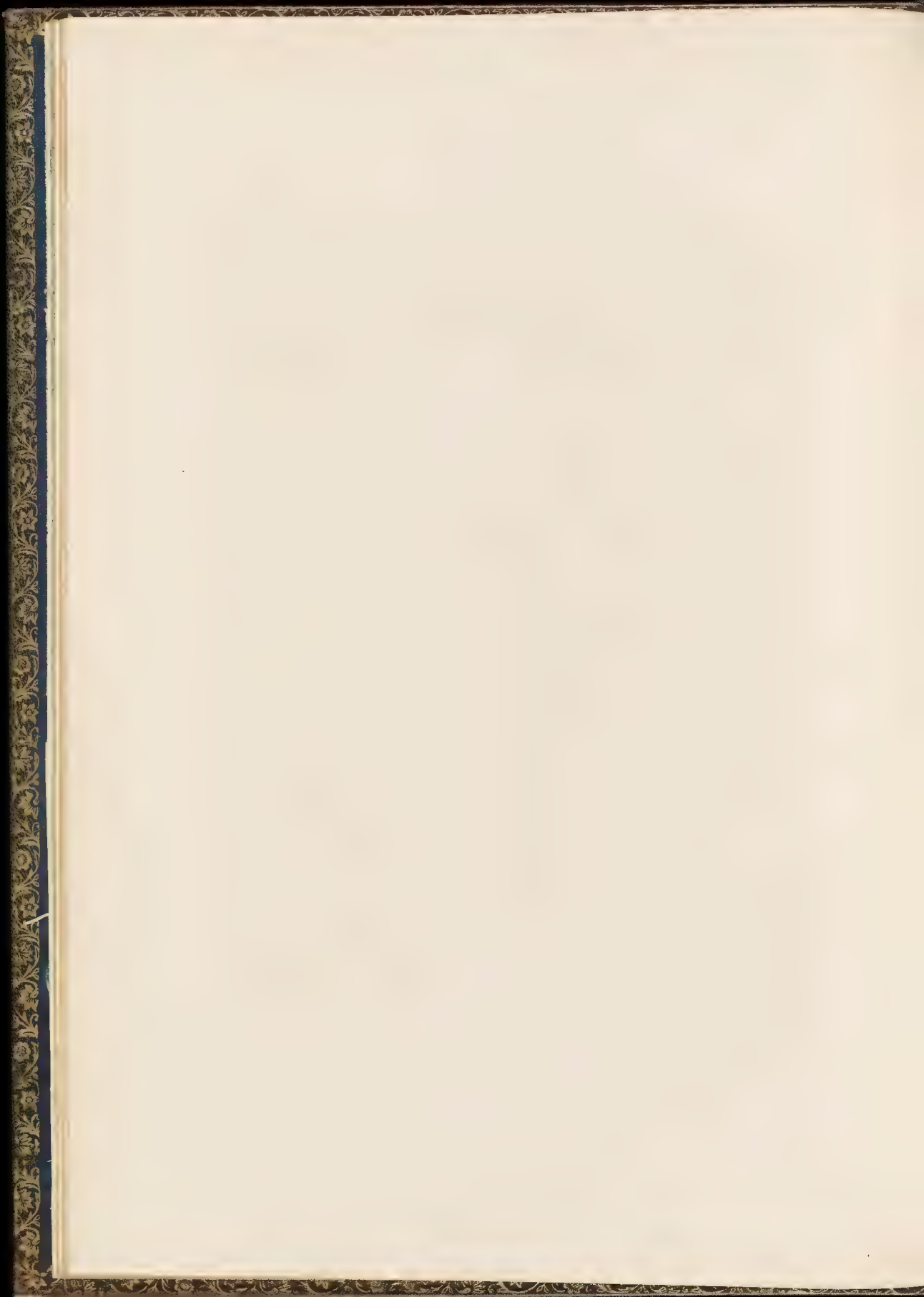
The name of the temple as given by the professor being Maya, falls in well with our inquiry, but the allusion to other names is evidence of an entanglement.



CHAN PRIESTS. FROM A USUMACINTA SLAB.

*The cast is at South Kensington.*





Thus in passing allusion to his remarks three divisions of worship are shown to have been in existence in the days of Landa, and the last named preserves the ancient style; locally it was *Zamna*. Old names and local appellations, ancient myths and modern traditions tinged with historical truths, are thrown together in an almost bewildering confusion in the religious oral traditions and history of the country.

The Maya high priest assumed the name of *Ahau-mai*, and Bishop Landa, in the first address he issued to the native converts to Christianity, took the title of *Ahau-yum*, "father-lord or twice lord," as fitting to be applied to one holding his dignified office, by which means he became known to the people as a chief personage, bearing the rank of a spiritual father or high church dignitary—an instance of the perpetuation of a pagan word on the score of expediency.

Having established the fact of the recognition of three vital principles in the first, second, and fourth emblems of the stone—those appertaining to the propagation of the species of man, of the animal kingdom, and of the varied vegetation of the world—another division presents itself, and some reasonable solution has to be found for the puzzling fifth emblem.

It is known to many as the mastodon's head, and Herr Strebel's nomenclature of a "frog-like form" has been accepted in Germany. Neither of these names are admissible, having no bearing towards the sentiment discovered to attach to Maya religion so far; they are not suggestive and have no hieroglyphic expression. A new departure, therefore, must be taken, and proof be given of the existence of a reasonable ground for not perpetuating the names previously in vogue.

That the form is something more than a mask or head is shown by the plates in Volume III. "Archives," reference being made more particularly to Figures 17, 23A, 25A, 26A, 27B; the latter is the Mexican museum specimen No. 58, drawn in such a manner as to show the full extent of the carving from the butt of one pointer to the other. So displayed the outer edge of the stone is seen; the grotesque head is greatly disproportionate to the lizard-like legs which are three in number, the fourth being dispensed with, apparently, rather than it should overlay the symbol forming the pointer; or it may have been omitted inadvertently, for in other examples the full number of four legs is found, care being taken that the outline of the stone's pointers be clearly seen, so that the first emblem should continue to be the recognised base of the conception, while the others remain accessory and subordinate to the *Ahau*.



The Goggle-eyed Mastodon form.

The side view of the stone has a still more lizard-like appearance than the front view and is not fully defined, as the other emblems had to be kept sufficiently in evidence. Though when laid flat the creature has a natural pose, this not being the right position of the "sacred stone," the outrage will be committed of treating a representation of an animal with four feet in an unusual manner; the so-called lizard has to be added to and placed upon the first and second emblems, and having come into the union has, as it were, to yield to the superior claim to priority of rank claimed by *Ahau*, and taking a position head downwards forms the base of the huge hieroglyphic. The case of



The "Sacred Stone" laid flat.



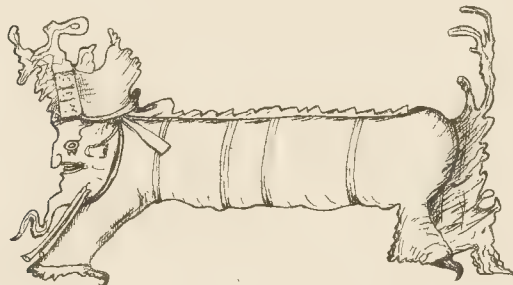
its being in this state, untrue to nature, is not so gross an outrage as appears at first sight, for no violence is done to a known form, or to the memory or to the traditional history of the mastodon, as this creature with grotesque outlines and exaggerated head is not of any known species, and could not be detected even were the antediluvian monsters marshalled in array before us. It should be borne in mind that each additional figurative expression was a graft upon the first stock and that rigid adherence to its form seems to have been a rule from which there was no deviation, requiring ingenuity in the arrangement of this mammoth hieroglyphic.

The lizard form cannot, however, be admitted into the combination unless it can be shown to have been employed as representative; it is therefore requisite to search for a manifestation of its presence in the Maya records. The Dresden Codex MSS. is ornamented with what is introduced, it would appear, as an illuminated illustration of a conventional form of the sun in the full outline of a long-bodied quadruped with clawed feet, and

a rather grotesque man's face or mask.

The contents of the Codex have reference to feasts, sacred things, ceremonies, the calendar and hieratic observances.

This human face has no identity with the mastodon's head form; the figure is not crouching as on the stone where it is compressed into the narrow space afforded by



The Sun God of the Codex Dresden.

the outlines of the first and second emblems; the resemblance is confined to the four clawed feet. Further evidence is, consequently, produced from a reliable authority who does not, however, state from whence the figure was taken, an omission to be in some respects rectified,

as an advance is made in this inquiry towards dissipating the obscurity hanging over the religious history of the country, by an example of a like character of greater interest, to which the name of the place of its discovery is attached. Chavero's figure differs from the preceding; nevertheless, before giving it a name some of its characteristics recall those of the larger forms; while one is on all fours, the other descends or is suspended in the air with the clawed limbs extended. It is a purely imaginary conception, with a goblin head or double mask, to which is appended the legend "el puesta del sol."



The Setting Sun. Chavero.

of the temples this figure seems not to represent the setting sun always, rather that orb in its strength placed vertically in mid-heaven; but that the sun is represented here and that it corresponds with the lizard-like figure of the stone cannot be doubted.

It will be shown that on the larger carved slabs

Moreover, it is in accord with the name of a principal deity, as *Kinich-ahau*, if "ch" is employed in the sense of "the release of," might be strained to afford the meaning of the release of the sun from his daily task, and so allude to the setting sun. The word as given by Rosny would, however, appear to be an abbreviation of *Kin-ich-ahau*; in this case "ich" being both eye and visage, it is fitting to render it as the Sun God or the God with the face of the Sun, and this falling in with the idea of an amalgamation of natural elements being the combination of the stone, the fifth symbol that of the sun, emblematic of heat and light, important factors in the active forces of life, is added as admittedly well adapted to form part of a "sacred stone" connected with nature worship.

Taking the last figure to be a received Maya form, the only dissimilarity to be observed between it and the original carved stone of the frontispiece is in the different contour of the head. But the broad-mouthed creature with goggle eyes was of early date, and in those examples not richly decorated it is most usually seen; later very ornate stones are those which seemingly tell of the adoption of a more classic style to the entire rejection of that which may be distinguished as the so-called mastodon's head.

The animal of the "sacred stone" having the characteristics admittedly resembling the Mexican historian's model, it is now time to point out the further testimony of its own personality, which should be conclusive evidence of its being the emblem of the sun—found in the numerous examples that have a protruding tongue. As time advanced, although these early emblems of the stone were no longer together forming one hieroglyphic, the full mask with the tongue thrust out was carried down to the days of the Conquistadores having the old significance, and with it sometimes the sacred macaw, the Aztec symbol of heat, and according to Chavero the protruding tongue meant the sun at the meridian, and its absence the setting, although his illustrations of the latter are both with and without the tongue. Señor Leopold Batres will probably now admit that the altering form of the head of the lizard-like sun emblem is not so difficult to account for as to stand in the way of placing all the known examples of the "sacred stone" in one class. Herr Strebel's carefully lithographed drawings in the "Archives" are well worth examination; they show the early broad mask with the other emblems, and several varieties in which it is sculptured with greater minuteness in a different manner. The two next illustrations are from this collection: one is an example of the substitution of a bird's head, probably that of the "condor," in place of the mastodon form, with an alteration in the pose of the limbs, yet, the clawed feet show it to be the sun form. Again, taking the finest examples of these stones, elaborately carved, the base of the stone instead of a bird has the head sometimes in profile of a man, attached to a figure not so lizard-like as in early specimens; nevertheless, an examination leaves no manner of doubt as to the intention. The form is that of a four-footed creature, never omitted in this figure of the sun, and we find in the human face not only a refined repetition of the illustration of the Dresden Codex, but also, what may have been by evolution an expression of imagery marking an advance in artistic treatment toward the "icon," the representation of the complete features of the human form divine.



The God with a Condor's head.



The God with a Man's head.



A bone pin in the British Museum is rudely scratched with the effigy of an idol with a condor's head, before which is a priest in the attitude of raising a mask—an act of worship peculiar to some of the Central American communities.



Bone Pin in the British Museum.

The notes in Volume III. of the "Archives" attached to Herr Strebel's communication on the misnaming of the stone are excellent references, as they arrange in a compact manner upwards of thirty specimens deposited in museums, dividing them into four groups:—The lizard form; the lizard form in combination with other things; the human crouching form; the normal form, square cut, plain. Being unpolished and polished, an attempt may be made to arrange them in chronological order, although everything has yet to be learnt in respect to artistic periods.

Preserving Herr Strebel's four divisions, what was first is now placed last, as in all probability these are stones not of an early but of a late period, of a time when the grouped emblems had parted company to take larger dimensions. It reverts, therefore, to its initial condition, and that it should have come down from age to age in size little differing from the earliest example known is remarkable—a circumstance, probably, unique in the history of Mexican sacred relics.

It is so bereft of interest that it must have held a high place in the estimation of the public by tradition, having no graphic significance, still with the Mayas it was introduced into the number of significant sculptured forms, taking the shape more nearly approaching that of V turned outwards at the pointers, when it would appear to have had all the power of the Aztec hieroglyphic of which a drawing has been given, and on the calendar stone of Mexico city it is seen, and is certainly expressive; consequently, the inference is, it was the latest recognised outline of the "sacred stone" utilized as descriptive: again, Penafiel introduces it on a figure of land, being placed there to indicate "fertile"—namely, cultivated land, and on a resemblance of the cotton-pod to convey the idea of a plentiful supply of the plant.



The last form of the Stone.

Something must likewise be stated concerning the hieratic sign *Ahau* as adapted by the priests to the use of the sculptor; the frame-work, so to speak, being horizontally elongated becomes the hieroglyphic attached to the names of the gods where it is deciphered as "the chief idol or god," particularly when in the position of being the second glyph of the large initial at the head of inscriptions on tablets and stelæ; occasionally it is the first glyph. Where, however, a head or mask is at the beginning, it comes next; its three dots are often removed to the lower outside margin, and they are entirely separated from the old frame-work in some cases, as they are spotted over the Copan monuments freely, having the same sentiment as the original sign, having a reference to the propagation of living things. Other hieratic signs are, as it were, turned inside out by the sculptors; *Chicchan* is an instance.

Last, but not least, the third emblem of the "sacred stone" has to be brought under inspection, and on looking at No. 58 (frontispiece) it needs no explanation or proof of identity. The serpent's head stands out clearly.

Serpent worship having been in prehistoric times spread over the greater part of the globe, it has certain recognised mannerisms, and the adoption of a generally accepted view of its nature may seem to be an easy solution of any difficulty attending it in respect to Central America; a false view of the situation, as to stray from the best stores of knowledge—the

ancient writings, the traditions, the sculptured stones of the locality—would be a short cut to a wrong conclusion.

Assuming that the serpent of the stone has not as yet been recognised by antiquarians as of the component parts of the Maya relic, it is well to draw attention to the fact that in many specimens, such as the best of two in the British Museum, it is little more than a round protuberance, and in the instance of the Orizaba stone, found by Dupaix, the head is represented by a disc. Variations of this sort, the wide difference in treatment between early and late examples, and the low and high art of many periods, are all factors that in the hands of skilled controversialists not disposed to take a broad grasp of the subject may furnish material for dissent to the idea expressed here that the serpent is one of the emblems of the "sacred stone."

The serpent could not have been overlooked by Rosny; therefore, the only way of accounting for its not being brought under consideration when he remarks upon the record given of the temples and idols observed by the early Propagandists at Uxmal is, that the blended recognition and adoration of several of them observable in the "sacred stone" and elsewhere, rendered it indistinct to him. The omission is worth noting as it creates the erroneous impression that this deity was not prominent in this particular place, although, as it will be demonstrated, there were sacred spots in this vicinity where the sculptured temple walls elevate the serpent to a position which almost eclipses the other four emblems of the stone. The difficulty attending their separate display was not deemed small, as the remark is made of the serpent, when the various creatures connected with the Maya religion and delineated in the hieratic writings are described in detail, "*Il reste encore à la science Americaniste le soin d'apprécier la véritable rôle,*" and Rosny declines to undertake to examine into the facts connected with serpent worship in America, as it would, he thinks, embrace a consideration of the entire religious ideas of the New World.

The Abbé Brasseur notices in his vocabulary that *ik*, the wind, was one of the symbols of Kukulcan, in the Maya dialect the sacred serpent, and known as "the feathered serpent"; really, as a living form, he was the rattle-snake. The native word suggests another, "huracan," commonly used by the Caribs and by natives of the West Indies for a tropical storm accompanied by rain, and from whence comes our word "hurricane." Further the vocabulary renders *hur* to separate, to tear away, *a* is water; thus we get "the water drawing serpent"—the cloud-form which with a spiral, serpent-like movement floats between earth and heaven, issuing blasts of wind and copious showers. The material form was therefore chosen as figurative of the air-god, whose rattling thunders shook the sky.

It is desirable to plod along the ancient route where possible, otherwise Aztec manuscripts would afford data confirming this view of the origin of serpent worship among the Mayas.

Excepting the colony of the Huastecs on the shores of the Gulf of Mexico, in the valley of the Rio Panuco, all the dialects of the Mayas are in contiguity. We cannot identify the builders of the ruined cities of Palenqué and Copan with any known tribe, but the archæological evidence is conclusive that whoever they were they belonged to this stock and spoke one of its dialects.\*

Unto them belonged the Cakchiquels, and, being Guatemalians, they are among those who were, doubtless, connected with if not of the tribe who built the sacred places described by Dr. S. Habel. The rise of speculative religion, its initial beginning, and the people

\* "The American Race," G. D. Brinton.



cherishing it in the infancy of its conception, are matters of obscurity. There is, however, an inducement to select this tribe's definition of the attributes of the serpent for the reason that it seems to be in conformity with the intention, hardly discernible, of the sculptures of the most attractive temples, and our investigation of the remains of sacred places will start in their district, as there the workmen's methods are after an ancient manner. To this tribe the serpent was "the god of fruitfulness," and this type suggests relations to the rain and showers.\*

His influence in combination with the sun is such as to permit of our seeing that there is a fitness in the alliance, bringing them together and causing them to be among the emblems grafted upon the "sacred stone." The craft of the priesthood in arranging this union is perceptible, as the changes of the seasons, the variation of the sky's aspect, the gathering storm, the sun's heat, distressing drought, the absence of rain or its abundance; the effects of all these and the benefits resulting from the operations of Nature in acceptable times would alike appeal to the credulity of a semi-civilized and inland people.

The growth of ages did not create marked progress in the evolution of religious thought in Central America, but the artist priest never wearied in varying the style of the emblems. They were made to blossom into varieties of the ancient symbolism, which produced shades of difference greatly mystifying the multitude at the time of their appearance, and perplexing the archæologists of our time as the archaic forms well-nigh disappeared; just as the normal type of the wild flower is but faintly discernible as, after passing through many gradations of development, we look upon the larger blossom and a variety of colour, the result of a careful treatment and elaborate calculation.

The "sacred stone" may have retained a high place in the temples; it certainly was included in the objects brought under the artistic treatment of the best sculptors, as it is covered with carving in many instances resembling that of the slabs of Palenqué and Copan.

That they were coeval with the stone is possible, and even if they in a measure outshone it by a greater splendour, as they were connected with an expansion of a teaching, closely adherent to the first principles composing its combination, it is hardly likely that, even if larger figures towered over it, their presence did anything but add dignity to the *Ahau*.

It was certainly valued as a religious memorial, from the fact of its being buried with the mighty dead, and the record attached to many preserved is of their having been unearthed with the remains removed from graves—notably, one in the district from whence the Guatemalan slabs deposited in Berlin came; and some have profiles on the butts of the pointers, possibly of the high priests, who it is known assumed a rank not inferior to royalty.

Its distribution was wider than has been stated in the notice attached to the specimens in the public museum of the city of Mexico, as the Ethnological Society of that place has a fragment of a richly carved pointer from Ranas, in Queretaro, where there are tumuli covering without doubt the ruins of a temple, with an undoubted pyramid mound in the vicinity similar to those in the southern provinces. Also, Doctor Matute of Guadalajara told the writer he had seen a Maya gold pendant, at any rate an object belonging to their age and of their religious rites, representing the erect figure of a nude young man having the head adorned with horns and the "pudenda" enlarged: it weighed three ounces. Found on an old highway in the district of Zapotlan, in the

\* "The Annals of the Cakchiquels," G. D. Brinton.

state of Jalisco, it was sent to the capital, where if it has not suffered a usual fate, that of dissolution in the melting-pot, it may be in the keeping of a private collector of antiquities.

Brasseur saw a resemblance between an ordinary hieratic sign, which he called "*fer de cheval*," and a stone in the museums, several examples of it being employed by the scribes, and in nine cases out of ten written with the pointers upwards, still, the likeness notwithstanding, the "sacred stone" was placed differently. It has a front in almost all cases, which is discerned at a glance generally by its being the most ornamented side of the stone; the back is sometimes flat. — Standing in a perpendicular position it may have been held by supports resting on a base, after the arrangement used for holding the large upright panels in a Confucian temple, of which wooden stands no trace would exist after the lapse of ages. So held it could have been carried on men's shoulders in the temple processions, a custom with regard to principal and ancient idols which existed in Mexico as late as the sixteenth century.\*

There are lightly incised carvings that have not been alluded to noticeable on many examples; being, however, subsidiary to the five emblems, they will not now be considered, as, though with the manuscripts they are closely involved in the general subject of this pagan faith, they present great difficulties and call for a special study.

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\* Landas: "*Relación de cosas de Yucatan*," Vol. III., pp. 213, 19, 29.



## CHAPTER II.

THE many phases of the complicated symbolism of the Maya priests should afford a fruitful field for archæological research, but the very groundwork of that study has to be laid. A means of acquiring a ready method of deciphering the simpler forms of the hieroglyphics has to be provided, and they are difficult of arrangement, as a sign has frequently more than one signification, which has been shown in the hieratic writings; therefore, any contribution adding to our present knowledge has hitherto been welcome, and, little by little, the persistent attempts made to join together fragments of translation accepted as proven, must lead to a wider comprehension of the entire question.

Symbolism found a wide surface for its pictorial expression on the walls of the temples, in the sacred books, on the robes of the priests and their head-dresses; the vessels used for libations and the burning of incense in the holy places, amulets and household gods, and the golden pendants in the shrine of the temple were more or less thus ornamented.

Its decipherment was like European learning in the Middle Ages—knowledge in the possession of the few, and those persons the priests and nobles, formed a caste apart. We may consequently suppose that, as in Assyria, the artificers employed in slowly carving the elaborate designs with stone implements were ignorant of the true meaning of the forms they produced.

The Quichéés, Mayas, and Nahuas alike adopted the myths. Brasseur places them as they were related to have occurred, and gives *Imox* the position of being the first mythical personage, and perhaps for this cause his name is preserved in the calendar;\* the nearest approach to this in the Maya tongue is *imix*, and it has to do with the origin of things.

The mythical *Imox* was venerated in the *ceiba*, which Landa writes *zeyba*, his translator *ceyba*; the terminal "ba" has the meaning of the concealed germ, and though a tree with this name is common in the country, planted in the villages in a conspicuous position, it is not in the Maya and Quichéé vocabularies. Following came *Ig*, the Quichéé for *ik*, the wind spirit, whose emblem became one of those of the rattle-snake, the thunder-god, but Brasseur thought the next in the order of traditional succession, *Votan* or *Utan*, alluded to the god of the air. The name would perhaps bear the interpretation of "he who is in the centre," and

\* "Collection des Documents dans les Langues Indigènes." Paris, 1861.

we should like to claim him as the sun; from him descended *Tepeu-Gucumatx*, a Quiché word, said to be the glorious serpent; from him sprang *Xpiyacoc* and *Xumucane*, which may convey the idea of propagation, fruitfulness, vegetation, and its abundance produced by moisture; at any rate, the idea of life and its continuity is to a greater or a less extent the thread upon which the myths are strung. These names became obsolete in Yucatan.

The Cakchiquels place a divinity first, as the efficient cause, who embraced the power and functions of both the sexes in his own person, which falls in with Brasseur's *Ahau* and the archaic yoni-lingam stone, No. 55 in the national collection of Mexico, which represented them only, and the narration regarding the myths of this tribe follows the course already traversed, closing with the names *Xpiyacoc* and *Xumucane*, who are termed the "Concealor, the protector, the paternal and maternal forces of organic life."\*

Starting from different points two important authorities agree, and we, too, with the sacred stone to indicate the way, arrived at similar conclusions before becoming acquainted with their views.

As to the analysis of these ancient words, those who choose to go further into the subject will find an amusing note appended to the second chapter of Brasseur's work last quoted.

The original mythical personage among the Quichés was venerated in a tree—around which the Mayas also danced, so says tradition and Landa†—and, no doubt, this was representative of the ramifications of life that sprang from one source; a symbol common in Europe as a genealogical tree, shown in some instances as springing from a prostrate human form as the base, root, and germ, from which rises a solid trunk with large and many small branches. The people of Central America in ancient times were, after the manner of people emerging from a savage state, realistic in their representation of the origin of the human species; Brasseur does not disguise this fact, and stoutly prosecutes his inquiries with thoroughness, recording all coming under his notice, be it pleasant or otherwise, in the right spirit of an investigator searching among the native races for the truth regarding the manners and customs of past days.

Some of the students are purists who have a tendency to ignore the less pleasant part of the nature worship, and in the city of Mexico there are scientists having more of the blood of the Mexicans in their veins than of Spanish, who desire also to expunge from the religious history of the Indian races anything distasteful. Procreative life was the essence of their religious system; the vital power of man, the forest growth with its buzzing insects and wild animals, the gathering serpent-like clouds, the howling wind, the bursting storm and rain torrent, the movements of the sun and moon, the breaking morn, the heat of day, evening with its changing light, and the stillness and repose of night, were influential processes mingling with their life, and full of an unexplained mystery beyond their control. In the absence of a revealed religion, they called forth reverence mingled with fear, and a worship such as untaught children of nature would give, now special, then blended, as the various elements around were at discord or in harmony.

As we are on the way to Palenqué, having the famous cross of that place in view and being entirely in agreement with the Mexican historian Chavero as to the symbolism of its structure, to take a course which affords exemplifications of the existence of like elements in a written record of the Mayas discovered in another place, may serve to dispel any hesitation that exists, calculated to stand in the way of accepting the theory that the

\* G. D. Brinton: "Essays of an Americanist."

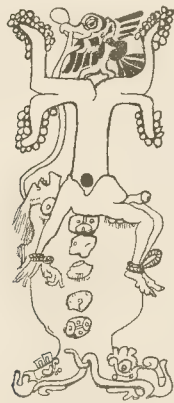
† "Quatre Lettres."



cruciform is here none other than the tree of the living principle in combination with the emblems of the "sacred stone."

The Dresden Codex, a Maya manuscript, provides an illustration of hieratic composition which is entirely enigmatical to the superficial observer, as it is a strange weird-looking shape in which is the Yun and Yin, the male and female principles of life, a term represented among the hieroglyphics by the sign employed to express them by those ancient people the Chinese.

The symbols of the male, the female, the vegetating germ, the serpent, the sun, are all built together to form this curious structure. Its base is the serpent, rendered an almost decorative object as its widespread jaws support the composite column; upon this rests a bulky mass—probably, a representation of the earth as a scene of a painful existence, as the bent back human figure lies in the posture of a sacrificial victim. But it is hermaphrodite; it is pregnant. It recognises the male and female principle, it is a life-like depiction of the birth and death of the human kind—a broad sketch of man's career from the cradle to the grave; a realistic conception which in the bound and tied condition of the outstretched captive may refer to the immutable law of nature, "the groaning and travailing" which a more civilized age found to be inseparable from our existence, and which drew forth comment from the apostle Saint Paul.



The Dresden Codex figure of the five Gods.

The upper section has a double signification, as, escaped from the thralldom of the posture adhered to when forming one of the combined elements or powers of the sacred stone, the sun appears "displayed" as in a heraldic manner, with his own four special limbs usefully adapted to show a spreading radiance, and to symbolize, also, the *ceiba* tree of human productiveness and the fruitfulness of vegetation. The employment of the condor's head in connection with an effigy of a sun-figure has been previously noticed; the usage may have been confined to a single locality in Mexico, but is to be seen on the carved stone slabs of sacred buildings in South America.

The perpendicular row of hieroglyphics on the figure, read from the top, may be *Ahau eb (ix) oib lamat*, of which a free translation would be "The supreme, the dual principles which rise (in fruitfulness), the seed, the germ, the embryo linked with heaven"—a legend in accord with the graphic character of this interesting example of Maya artistic work, to which at present no date can be assigned.

The composition of this figure, though widely different in outlines from the "sacred stone," the two being made up of the same elements, explain each other, and strengthen the endeavour to obtain a firm basis for the theory put forward regarding the religious sentiment prevailing in the country of their origin. They serve for examples, as good as at present can be procured, of the diversity of the combined forms entering into the system of priestly mystification. A constant and systematic variability to be observed, as, with a mass of material to be dealt with, an advance is made in the examination of more combinations, at last reaching a period when their complexity almost baffles research.

But, through all the involved windings of the symbolism, certain cardinal marks are conserved, so that it is evident that these ruined temples, these ancient books, and sculptured stones demonstrate that the native religion was of long establishment. The symbols of the

life of vegetation, of man, and the lower animals become so blended in mystic grouping, that the recognition of these living principles becomes a dual worship. The serpent for a lengthy period held a position of superiority; the sun, finally, in historic times holding the most honoured place with the Aztec race.

The domination of a priesthood throughout Mexico was, without doubt, as real a thing as their rule in other ancient countries, for we find them conspicuously portrayed on the monuments, where of noble families nothing is found. It is more and more apparent that with the sacerdotalist communities was the seat of learning, and judging from Landa's narrative, in which the existence of principal families is hardly noticed, the high priest was paramount.

He left his palace in a litter borne on men's shoulders, receiving the recognition due to a monarch, and it is related that when the soldiers of Cortez forced the surrender of Izamal, the high priest of that place and the king of the Tutulxins made their submission as though of equal rank,\* and this enabled the propagandists of the Christian faith to assume and exercise a spiritual authority over the people at large, as priests occupying the position and place left vacant by the downfall of the old religion.

So far as the Spanish historians tell the story of priestly rule, their orders took the division of the principal deities, and in the case of the large districts of Copan and Palenqué we are led to suppose that the most numerous were the caste attached to the service of the shrines consecrated to the worship of the serpent god, who in one form or another, more especially upon the slabs which it is said were placed in a building when set apart for and dedicated to a particular divinity, is frequently represented.

This surrounds the locality with a special interest, because myth and historical lore commingled have transmitted to us accounts, more or less mysterious and fabulous, of the wonder-working powers of this god; his skill in all things connected with the treatment of the land, and the general improvement in agriculture under his beneficent rule. This government or direction of affairs it is generally conceded was not the exercise of the powers of the deity, but was rather the result of the intelligence of the sacerdotalists, who practised the peaceful arts, were skilled in husbandry, and made the earth bring forth abundantly.

The Maya writings being few in number, the field of investigation as regards them is exceedingly confined; their general signification is in accord with the graven testimony of the temples. This Professor Cyrus Thomas recognises when he takes Bishop Landa's narrative regarding the manners and customs of Yucatan as they were amid the dark paganism of A.D. 1550, or thereabouts, and makes of it a running commentary as applied to the pictorial part of the Manuscript Troano; avoiding, however, the work of attempting to decipher the hieratic writing of this book, which it is hoped he will not long delay, as his ability in dealing with such matters has raised our expectations.

The separation of the true from the false, the myth from the historical fact, seems to call for the exercise of a peculiar faculty, and the Central American legends furnish ample scope for its application, mingled as they are with the narrative of men who lived and played their part, and visionary statements regarding mysteries rendered intensely deep by the lapse of time and the lack of materials to explain them. It will be found that, as in other lands, rites and hierarchical forms become embodied into ritual and liturgical rolls and into canonical codes. With them is connected a sacred history of the origin of the people and of mankind;

\* Desire Charney: "Les Ancient Villes du Nouveau Monde," 1885.



partly symbolical expressions of thought, partly historical traditions. Both histories, the ideal and the real, by the natural laws of the human mind, take the historical form. Hence originates the myth by the same necessity as did the symbol. The one is as much the expression of an ideal truth as the other, and both are so by the same organic law from which language originates and progresses.

The beginning of the world, the primitive union of the infinite and finite, cannot be expressed in other than the historical form, any more than the notion of a being can be embodied otherwise than in a substantive bearing a personal character. Myth is essentially the product of the organic transformation of thought into reality, of the infinite into the finite; it is the primitive philosophy and poetry of mankind. But then the mythical element becomes obscured; it is mistaken for real, where it expresses a symbolical idea; or it is misunderstood as originally ideal, where it stands upon the ground of reality. Historical facts are mythicized; ideal facts assume a historical garb.\*

The groundwork of the subject, though imperfectly laid, is so far founded as to allow of an endeavour to find a manifestation, on a grander scale, of the ideas discovered in minor objects; and to accomplish this, a comparison has to be made of the rubbed or carved stones forming the covering of a portion of the exterior and interior walls of the Maya temples.

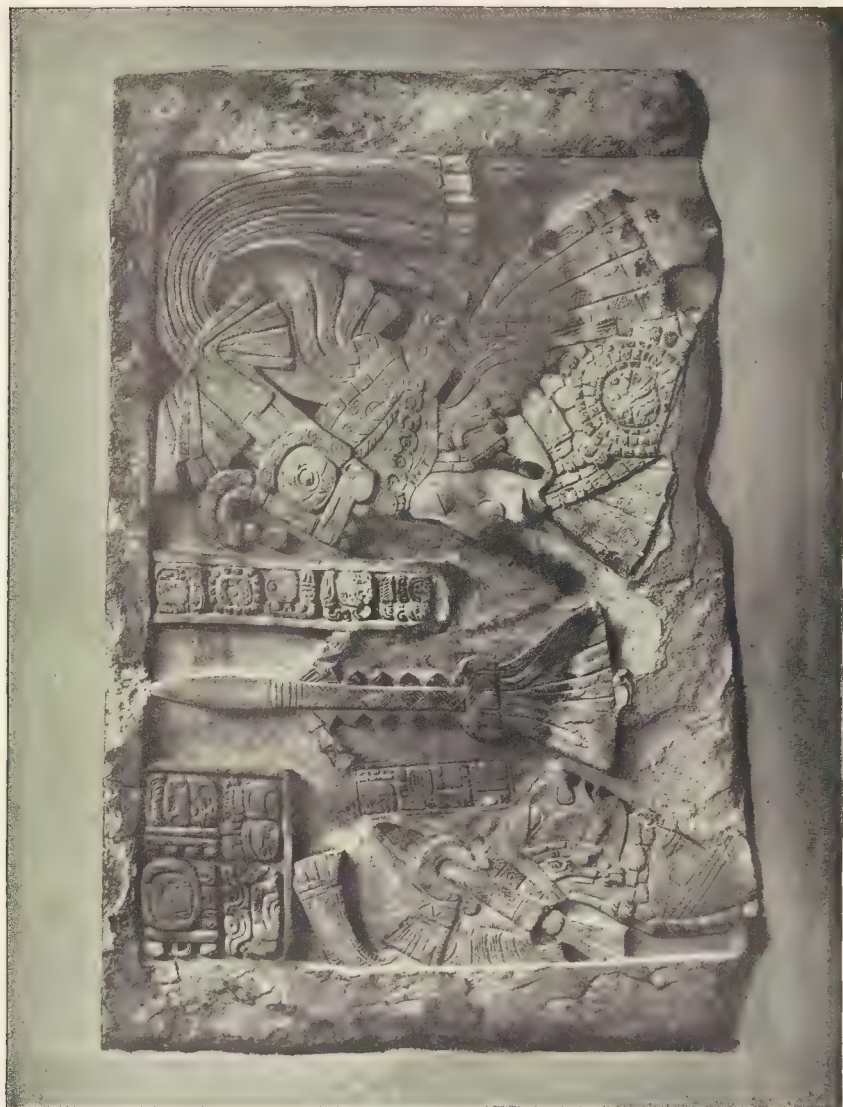
The Guatemala district comes within the scope of such an inquiry, the remains of its temples having in their simpler and less ornate style the appearance of being the earliest of the Central American group; examples from them will begin a sequence to be constructed so far as the present state of knowledge permits in a probable chronological order. The guidance being what can be ascertained of the stages of development, in which course it is possible to err grievously, should causes undiscovered have led to a rapid rise in artistic talent in one place, while other places less central, less rich, and consequently less progressive or barren of opportunity, stood still.

Approaching the sacred places and the shrines of the past, it would be a satisfaction to enter upon the study of their hieroglyphics with some understanding of the manner of building up the figurative particles of these calculiform inscriptions. The alphabet and notes of the signs employed for the days, the months, and the cardinal points of the compass is a legacy from Landa; the first named has not yet been found efficient, and was, probably, an endeavour to find tones in Maya equivalent to the Spanish. The decipherment of the hieroglyphics with the small aid of the month and day signs produces fractional results, and as little can be said about them; the emblematic ornamentation of the sculptures, which are identified as having the same tendency as the archaic glyphs, will almost entirely be the matter brought under notice as we pursue the investigation.

Having chosen the language of the Cakchiquels when the attributes of the serpent had to be acquired from a remote source, it is consistent to begin to trace the developments of religious thought in their country, where at Santa Lucia, Cosumalwhuapa, are vestiges of an old world civilization.

The liberality of the United States Government in publishing the observations of their archaeologists in the papers issued from the Bureau of Ethnology, has preserved and given circulation to many a useful record, and Dr. S. Habel's narrative of his travels in Guatemala, and his description of the slabs at Santa Lucia accompanied by engravings, are the source of information made use of.

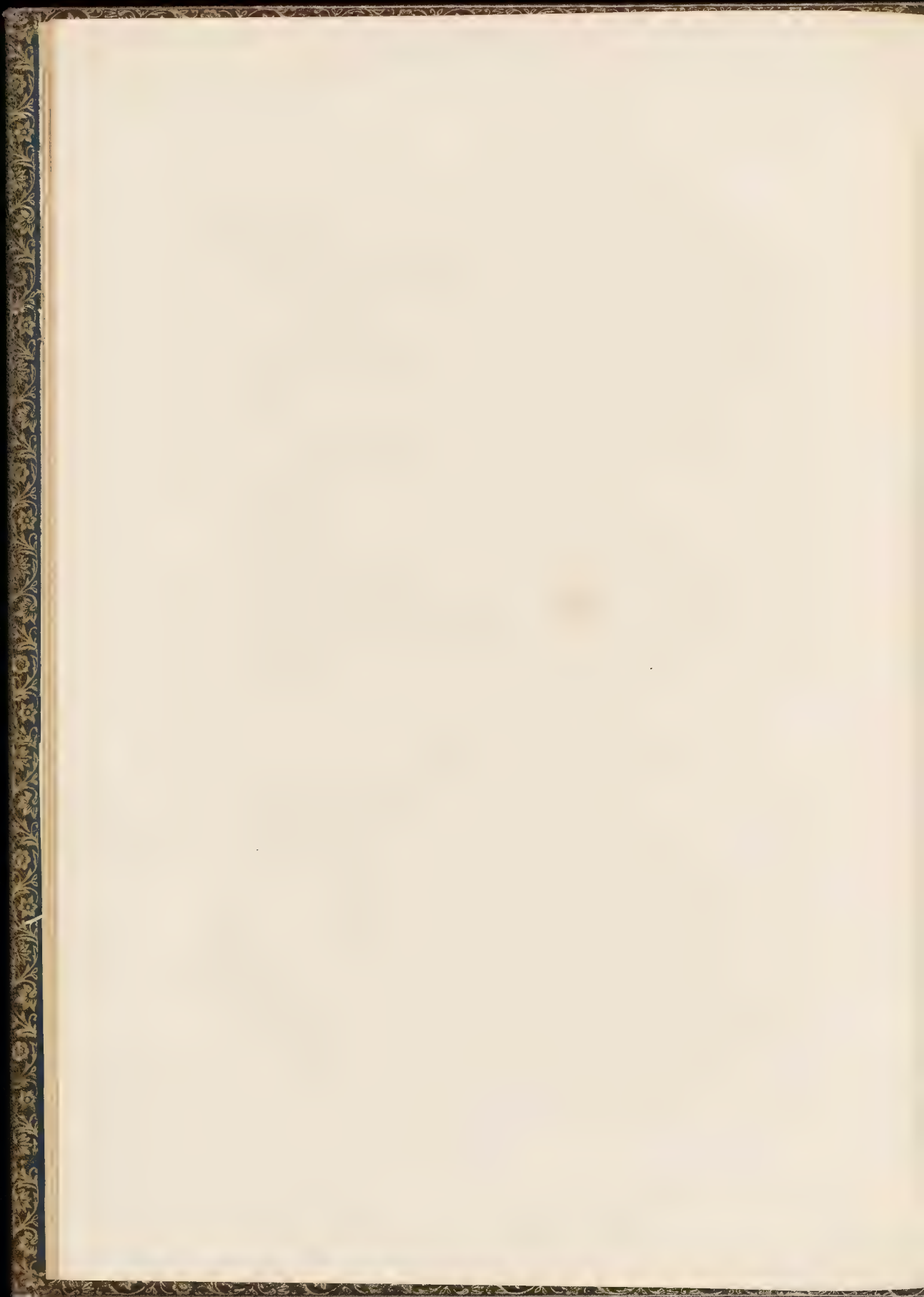
\* Bunsen: "Philosophy of Universal History," Vol. II., p. 183.



PRIEST'S; THE CHIEF WEARING THE EFFIGY OF KUKULCAN.

*The original, from Uxmalchita, is at South Kensington.*





The drawings taken on the spot are of slabs in low relief, and their value consists in their being not only good, but the one complete set in existence, as the originals—excepting some that fell into the sea—on being acquired for the Berlin Museum, though reproduced as casts, have not been photographed.

In them the early pagan annals of the country may be said to have their graphic record, and they contain an emblematic display in minor detail largely exceeding that of the objects that were used in the introductory stage of this subject.

The deities and their worship, the priests in costume, and a variety of emblems lavishly distributed afford a broader insight into the observances obtaining in the temples, and especial interest is connected with the fact of the dress, ornaments, and emblems belonging to the various figures introduced being comparatively simple. Thus, before reaching the temples that are extravagant in style, and the elaborate monuments of Palenqué and Copan, a notion can be formed of the rudimentary style of hieratic mystification, and the persistent manner of its increase and continuity.

Three castes of priests, those attached to the shrine of the gods and goddess of the life-giving principles, the sun, and the serpent, are seen, and other deities who it would seem are varied manifestations of the first-named. The word "shrine" is inserted advisedly because the slabs being near together, it may be conjectured they were originally part of a temple dedicated to the worship of all the gods they represented, who had not then, as in the days of Palenqué's greatness, a pyramid and shrine apart, but stood together in close association; which conjecture, if correct, explains the continual blending of their various emblems in the temples of Chiapas, as if a custom long observed.

The following is a list of the principal illustrations of the slabs, as given by Dr. Habel, slightly curtailed in the description\* :—

- No. 1. A priest with a crab-like head-dress.
2. A person adoring an aged divinity.
3. A worshipper and the image of death adoring a flaming deity, probably the sun.
4. A worshipper adoring a deity, probably the moon-goddess.
5. A worshipper invoking the "god of fertility."
6. The general aspect similar to No. 5.
7. Representing a deity enclosed in a shrine, the head resembling a crab.
8. Representing a worshipper; the personal ornaments are unique.
9. A person of rank seated on a throne, and holding a club-shaped sceptre.

Nos. 10 to 16 are of figures difficult to classify and hieroglyphics.

Although in accord with the writer in the main, in scrutinizing his description it is perceived that room exists for some emendation. That a definite conclusion and a sound basis may be attained to, suggestions are made which are the result of possessing some comprehension of the religious spirit of the age, through the interpretation of the "sacred stone."

As to the sources of information permitting of the emblems or symbols used for ornamental and sacerdotal purposes being named, it is necessary to state, as the nomenclature is the result of a wide consideration of a subject embracing so many things, it is impossible to refer to the various parts of the field of research from which they have been collated. But

\* "Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge," Vol. XXII, 1880.



it is hoped that they will be found to be correct, as the illustrations given by Penafiel and the Mexican historian Chavero have been mainly relied upon as the groundwork, and verified as the inquiry proceeded.

Following Dr. Habel's arrangement of the slabs, the description is now as follows:—Plate No. 1 on the list is of a priest of the serpent caste, wearing a crab on the head, a Peruvian symbol for water observed in Santa Lucia, but not elsewhere in Mexico. An obsidian knife is in one hand, in the other a mask is carried: the ear is uncovered, one foot is bare, both habits having some significance, being unusual in other places. Cloth here may have formed the greater part of the head-dress, "the scimitar shape" is a feather, and the so-called "scythe form" is a serpent's tail. From the top of the head downwards the ornamental circular forms are emblems of the sun, often shown on an open hand; the curled forms represent the clouds, the priest being attached to the service of the "god of the air." The huge girdle has a serpent's head and a smaller head is of a like character; immediately below the shoulder-blade is a tie, on the knot the yun and yin; below it is a shield with the marks of *Ahau*, and there are other matters not explainable. The two figures at the base, as the speech-stave is directed to them, may be assistant priests—the so-called "skull," or more correctly mask, of one shows him to be officiating for the sun. Both figures hold masks in the hand known by a frill, beards were not worn so; these masks were grotesque.

Plate No. 2 is of a deity raised on high; the head, arms, and breast of gigantic proportions are alone given; there is a background mountain-like in outline, resembling the earth in the composite figure of the Dresden Codex. The age of the personage tends to the adoption of the view that it refers to the great First Cause, the Creator. His brain gives forth that which creates the flowers and fruit; moreover, from him proceeds that which enters the earth, in allusion, possibly, to its quality of mysterious productiveness. The few symbols on the head-gear are of the sun.

The officiating priest is of the sun caste; his head carries a sign rarely given—a key-hole describes it, or rather, it is a groove radiating from a circle, and is of the order of signs known as the cup and ring cuttings, derived from the most primitive times. The Santa Lucia slabs afford another example, and once again it is seen on a profusely carved monolith at Copan, being in these three instances allied with the emblems of the sun; no great criterion of its proper worth where the emblems of many deities are mingled together. The priest, also, has in his head-gear a mask, and two front faces in the girdle and dress accord with his class, again marked by a mask in the right hand, which has the tongue protruding. As to the object behind him on the ground, of a bent fish-tail form, its use is unknown, unless it served as an incense-burner into which copal gum was cast—the bend in it is after the manner of some examples of incense burners.

Plate No. 3 is described as the Sun, and in it there are the counterpart characteristics of that orb as it was in its "sacred stone" period. The descending attitude and clawed human arms explain its character, fully exemplified now by the diverging rays encircling it, as it bursts through the jaws of a mammoth serpent, which is a figure of the clouds. The looped head-dress is worthy of special notice as it is handed on as a type of this image. Entering into the service of the scribes it was taken into the calendar, where the loops are angular, when within them are given the cruciform trees relating to the old groundwork of the Maya religion. It is worn on the robes of the priests in the days of fuller priestly garments, and plays a part among the hieroglyphics, possibly connected with time. The priest's decorations have much in common with the preceding one—but the sun mask has horns or ears,

and another on a bracket has a distinguishing nose, of which more hereafter; on the girdle is a variety of the serpent's head. The mannikin is hardly to be accepted as a "skeleton image of death"; the outline is a mannerism in sculpture. The examples further south are numerous, and the so-called "skull" is a sun mask from beneath which a voice comes forth (marked on the slab), that of the inferior priest. The collar of the idol should be noticed as of a superior kind, and better than the specimens preserved to us.

The distinctive peculiarities of the deity, plate No. 4, has led to a diversity of opinion regarding it; the starting-point of this paper, however, renders it unnecessary to hesitate in the matter of giving it a name.

This female deity is the sole goddess as yet known to us, and it is a matter of regret that the absence of any hieroglyphics on the slab precludes the possibility of either assigning to her the native title peculiar to her, or the date when she took a place among the deified conceptions of the people of Central America. No doubt the archæologist will pronounce the distance wide between the archaic sculptures and these refined Santa Lucia carvings, and will also judge that a long distance of time separated Santa Lucia from the period of the formation of the complicated symbols of the Palenqué class.

The goddess appears in mid-heaven as the last-mentioned deity did, and leans over or through a segment of a circle too round to be fairly termed a crescent. This, however, Dr. Habel describes as a "circle," whereas it has pointers that recall the archaic example of the "sacred stone" in the National Museum of Mexico, and the general sentiment expressed in the details of the emanations from the figure lead to the supposition that the "sacred stone" is here depicted.

The branches in this case do not issue from the head, but from the breasts of the figure, an important difference, and so taking this fact into connection with its feminine type, it is possible, without overstraining the sense of the whole, to give it the name of "the Goddess of Fecundity," which would include human kind and the vegetable kingdom. Dr. Habel, page 73, has said that "the aborigines of America had no cattle," so any allusion to quadrupeds is not to be expected among the surroundings of the goddess.

The figure wears a breast covering, thickly wadded, with projecting pistil border, while the pendant emblems are a disc, for the sun; the winds and the four points of the compass are indicated by a cross of equal limbs, shown on a bifid foundation, the long ends of this ornament being cut inwardly in zigzag, as the lightning sign. This step-like outline appears to have created a model for the high places artificially made as the tumulus gave place to the builders' pyramid; it is, also, a chief feature of the ruins of several of the sacred sites of the ancient communities, and the manuscripts use the form to express a shrine.

The deity is surrounded with fruit, flowers, and budding vegetation, disposed on branches; one bears a circular human face and its counterpart, one being on the left and the



The Sun God of Santa Lucia.



other on the right, has a circle, enclosing two germs, placed above a vase. The curious result is that the produce of these two issue from the vase as one thriving stem. How does this occur if the propagation of the human and other species is not typified?



The Goddess of Fecundity. Santa Lucia.

representation of the carved or rubbed stone image discovered under 62 feet of guano in Peru, a true *crux ansata*.\*

The disposition is to make it of equal meaning with *Ahau* in its application to animal and vegetable life, but the view being supposititious and unsupported it is open to criticism.

The priest of this slab wears the three-pointed figure, yet carries a mask and wears a belt, also, behind him is a clawed creature with a protruding tongue, each and all appertaining to the sun.

No. 6 is of a deity surrounded by fruit and flower-bearing branches and with symbols already described. What looks like the "representation of a bull's head" is a large sun mask placed before the incense burner, and similar to No. 23 of this series reproduced in the illustration as a form which is constantly met with, and one that has often been mistaken for a death's head.



Sun Mask; Santa Lucia Slab.

It is thus carried on for centuries always allied to the sun, and is seldom seen on a large scale except with the tongue hanging out. Even in later days, when improved and having a rotundity which more truly gives the sun's outline, it still shows its tongue.

No. 7 represents the Serpent God with a mild expression of countenance and wearing a head-covering decorated with sun disc ornaments, and three points in front of a like order; from the head falls an arrangement like dropping water; a canopy artistically treated is constructed of the spirals indicating rolling clouds and the teeth and jaws of a colossal serpent's

\* Hutchinson, Thos. J.: "Two Years in Peru," Vol. I, p. 104.

head. The presence of the crab emblem, whose signification has been given already, is confirmatory of the position now assigned to this image. Strange to say, the bird on slab No. 8 resembles the condor associated with the serpent in the sculptures of the remains of the Peruvian temples; the priest near him wears a cross, the wind symbol, and a mask showing him to be of the Serpent caste.

No. 10 represents a seated chief, fully described by Dr. Habel, excepting the cup and ring symbol of the necklace. As to the paddle-shaped instrument, it was among the emblems of ancient rank in the southern continent, and to this day in British Guiana among the Warraus Indians there are war clubs in use of a similar type, one being shaped somewhat like a paddle with a thin rounded shaft and a broad, flat, rather oval blade.\*

In Peruvian graves of the Inca period, garments, probably, buried with the remains of a chieftain have among other rows of emblems woven into the pattern of the stuff a repetition in continuous line of a form identical with this paddle-like staff.

The remaining hieroglyphics of these slabs call for no particular remark; the so-called "boarsheads" are those of the serpent carelessly wrought, and the three heads on the slab of the sun-god appear to be in relation to the clawed animal whose skin, head downwards, is part of a priest's temple costume.

The irregularity of hieratic writing and of the sculptured hieroglyphics is a main difficulty constantly encountered in the endeavour to classify and decipher; in the carving of the larger monuments the spaces or katuns are rigidly adhered to, but careless drawing of the hieroglyphic frequently produces an enlargement of one portion and the consequent cramming in of other parts in a cursive manner which is perplexing.

A study of the excellent stone carvings of Santa Lucia induces a perhaps too high idea of the Maya civilization, and, notwithstanding the artistic taste here and there displayed, the fact that they illustrate the acts of Indians who were untouched by culture not indigenous must not be overlooked.

Before taking up another section of the ruined temples of the country, exalted views may be brought to a lower level by reference to some of the forms, the rites, ceremonies and emblems of the natives of North America not so favoured as the Mayas. In both archaic and modern times they were of the same order of religious aspiration, and it is doubtful if the more refined surroundings of magnificent edifices and an elaborate ceremonial, with the greater pomp and circumstance of a rich hierarchy, wrought among the people a spiritual advancement greatly beyond the intellectual condition of tribes almost savage. Where their religion had birth is still a matter of dispute. To suppose that because it had great hold of Central America that district was the place of its origin might be an incorrect idea, as our view is necessarily limited—a conclusion such as might have been attained to by an uninformed person who, visiting Italy in the latter part of the fourteenth century and beholding the magnificence of the Papal court, assumed that the cradle of Christianity was Rome.

Of the primitive American rock sculptures, assuming that the incised cup markings take that place, an example is found in the district of Orizaba, Mexico—a huge boulder with nine spots on the upper part forming a segment of a circle, which, with other five clustered together like a constellation, comprise the sole ornamentation. As to the group of nine it seems to be the thrice three dots of the Maya sign *ix*, "abundant"—a treble repetition gives "most abundant," a mode of acknowledgment of good seasons in the agricultural

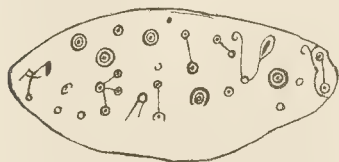
\* E. F. im Thurm: "Among the Indians of Guiana," 1883, p. 299.



districts noticeable on the elaborate monuments of Copan. The five dots arranged in order like King Charles' Wain with one horse, perhaps has reference to the god-head, the undivided five as at Tihoo; for the same cluster is attached to the head-dress of Montezuma in his portrait as produced in Justin Winsor's history, and it is also on a priest's girdle at Santa Lucia.

This Mexican boulder seems to tell us of an abundant harvest, plenty, and contentment as plainly as a group of stones of which Dr. Rau gives a drawing describes disaster. This is a druidical funeral stone chamber or group of unhewn rocks at Herrestrop, Denmark, on the top of which are incised tracings of ships, and three marks, erroneously called "wheels," they being the wind-cross emblem in a circle. Recording that a gale, may be a circular storm, caused the destruction of several ships and many men, as the thrice-repeated sign gives the superlative and tells of "very much wind" and bad weather.

The Piedra Pintal at Caldera, Western Veraguas, has incised figures, the sun being recognisable. From this tropical region for hundreds of miles north the Orizaba stone alone presents itself, but on reaching Forsyth County, Georgia, a rudely sculptured stone



Incised Rock, Forsyth County, Georgia.

is to be seen bearing numerous emblematic markings akin to the more primitive medicine-men signs. These are well-nigh universally distributed over the northern continent, and in the southern as far as the country adjoining Buenos Ayres, a pretty good proof of the affiliation of the American tribes in the matter of a nature worship.

The rock is a carved or incised boulder of fine-grained granite, about nine feet long, four feet six inches high, and three feet broad at its widest point. The figures are cut in the boulder from one-half to three-quarters of an inch deep. As yet, no interpretation of these figures has been offered, nor is it known by whom or for what purpose they were made; but it is generally believed they were the work of the Cherokees. On the eastern end of the boulder, running vertically, is a line of dots like drill holes, eighteen in number, connected by an incised line.\*

On three points this ancient Georgia relic is in relation with the Central American sculptures of the best period. It has the appearance, in respect to its dimensions, of having served as an altar, though not necessarily for the purposes of human sacrifice. The tracings on its northern face bear a resemblance to the older or hieratic Maya signs; in the left hand figure to the serpent, as it exists in the day sign *Cimi* or the *Ka* of Landa's alphabet; in the circles with a dot and those concentric, to the sun; in the form of a ring with a sprout of vegetation on the one side, and a branch with the "yoni" on the other, to the Santa Lucia slabs and to the *Ahou* so often alluded to; in the eighteen dots of the eastern end, to the number of the months of the Maya year. The carvings of the southern side repeat these symbols; the life-giving germ signs are given twice, one being a root, not a sprout, and the serpent is there under another aspect, that of the well-known wind sign, the cross of equal limbs the emblem of the god of the air, the waters of land and sea, and the rain clouds. The signs identical with those of Santa Lucia, the significance of which are unknown, are the ring and groove, the circles joined by a line, three circles attached by branches to a larger one, and the segment of a circle; the difference being, on the rock they are incised, on the slabs in relief.

\* Chas. Rau: "United States Geographical Survey." 1881. Vol. V., page 95.

Vestiges of serpent worship remained until lately in northern America, and the observances of the Zuni tribes of New Mexico and the Moquis of Arizona being in unison with the sentiment of the Maya peoples, assist in a reception of an idea of the position this divinity occupied in their minds.

Already, in an examination of the archæological remains at Santa Lucia it has been shown that this deity was the god of the air. The Moquis, when visited a few years ago at the time of their festival held in honour of the serpent, had in their place of worship, painted on the east wall, a symbolical design representing three rows of clouds from which depended long and narrow stripes typical of rain, while from right and left issued a representation of lightning. It was explained that this was a prayer to the god of the clouds for refreshing rain upon the Moquis crops.

There was a well-executed representation of the sun and a phallic figure after the manner of several found with the Zunis. The ceremony of lustration or sprinkling for medicine men was practised and termed "bautista por cochinos." This foreign appellation came about in this wise:—

In 1694, the Spanish general who conquered New Mexico insisted upon the discontinuance of a dance in honour of an idol, called by the Castilians the *Cochino* or Pig, from its ugly snout. This dance was never openly revived so long as the Spaniards could prevent it, yet it is possible that the dance of the tablet may have afforded a satisfactory substitute, and in this and the serpent dance a tablet worn at the back of the head was of a distinctive and probably typical form.

A sacred monolithic rock, a sacred tree, and many serpents were introduced into the ceremonies attending the principal festival, masks with long noses were used in every dance, and the dancers carried and shook T shaped rattles, in connection with which observance it may be notified that in the Quiché language *soch* meant rattle-snake, and, also, an instrument with which to rattle; the tablets bore, in addition to the symbol in the illustration, that of the wind-cross, and among the sacred pipes were some marked with a cross like that of Malta.\*

Here then are relics in the hands of living Indians held sacred, serving to confirm the interpretation put upon the story told on the sculptured walls and monuments of the Maya temples, and they accord with the religious elements revealed by the decipherment of the "sacred stone."

The "bautista por cochinos" is an expression which conveys in three words a narrative, namely, that, as with the Mayas, a rain god was worshipped who, for reasons only known to the originators of the shape, was represented as wearing a mask with a long nose or snout; that the Spaniards called him the pig idol, and the priests, who wore similar masks, and were rain-makers or medicine men, "cochinos" or pigs. The whole matter was abolished by the invaders as being unseemly.

The less objectionable ceremonies were, however, continued, and their preservation brings down to us a rough sketch of practices that prevailed in Mexico centuries before.

The serpent is the object of worship, being another form of the "cochino"; the head-tablet with the letter is recognised as a well-known symbol in Central America in connection with the fertilization of the earth, while the top of this board bears a strong similarity to a pyramid in its square-cut pattern. The sacred tree and stone take us back to a remote period



The Serpent Dancer's head-board.

\* J. C. Bourke: "The Snake Dance of the Moquis of Arizona." 1884.



when the foundation of a feeling of veneration was laid in the Maya country, and a cross stamped on a pipe of ancient date is identical, except in its being more angular, with the looped four-sided head ornament of the sun-god of Santa Lucia. Eighteen claws and the same number of snakes carried by the dancers may, again, have reference to the division of time; the markings of pottery used in their idol worship are symbolical. The centre piece of the head-board is an Aztec form for serpents' tongues.

How widespread these conceptions were is a subject too lengthy for the present space, but universality may almost be claimed throughout America. The wampum belts of the six nations contain the symbols of these idols, and the rain-makers, or medicine men—the veritable priests of the various tribes—seem as widely disseminated as the tribes themselves.

Our abandonment of the ruined Mexican stone temples for awhile is a digression which gives a little animation to a dead past, and lowers the tone of the imagination when it is again considered, correcting an inclination difficult to control—that of raising uncultivated aboriginal tribes to our present level, instead of persistently endeavouring to get down to a correct estimate of their rude and semi-civilized condition.

The rock inscriptions at Arch Spring, near Zuni, are even more interesting than those of Georgia. They have a full face of the sun, a figure wearing a head-dress with five feathers, there is a mask with a long line pointing upwards for a nose; water is shown in the whirled form; a shield is marked with the pyramid form and the wind four equal-limbed cross. There is also a design somewhat like the "acalt" or yoni-lingam, but what attract most attention are the dots, the cluster of the five principal idols. Bancroft has an illustration of this in his "Native Races," Vol. IV., and Whipple's account is in Pac. R. R. Report, Vol. III., p. 76, &c.

## CHAPTER III.

THE district of Palenqué in the Maya country has afforded a subject for controversy between scientists, two points appertaining to it remaining undecided—namely, the age of the temples, and the full meaning of their symbolism and hieroglyphics.

The forest in the vicinity has exogenous trees whose rings count up to two thousand years, taking each to be an annual production, but Charnay, an acute observer who was inclined to promote an idea of moderate age for the temples, declares that the conifers of the country create a growth marking a ring month by month; Stephens, also, is sceptical as to the extreme antiquity of these remains. Therefore, until the dates graven on the tablets, of which there are many, are all deciphered and classified, to hazard a guess as to the date of their erection and disuse would be of little avail.

There is, however, internal evidence of their being later than the ruined edifices of Santa Lucia, in that the entire mannerism of the artistic treatment of the sculptured slabs, although the motive is the same, is increasingly ornate, while there is a departure from an idol form to the adoption of a blended symbolism, which rejects the human figure as an expression of deified power. They dispute with Copan a claim to highest antiquity, but are now arranged as second in progressive order, for the reason that the priestly figures are less clad and so are closer to the style of Santa Lucia, to which there is another resemblance in the use of slabs. While between the hieroglyphics of Palenqué and Copan there is not much variation to notice, the slabs and monuments, with the remains upon the banks of the Usumacinta river, certainly afford examples of figure carvings belonging to two or three periods.

Palenqué was the name given to the place by the Spaniards, which has no local equivalent, but Brasseur and W. W. Blake, M.A., of the city of Mexico, alike consider it to have been derived from Palenku or Palenmé, which the latter says, in the Quiché tongue may be rendered "the city of the priests." Chavero would have it called Nachan, "the place of serpents, or of the serpent caste," which he states was the ancient title of the city, and if not the people, the priests called themselves Chans, and in support of this, the testimony of the sculptures shows their preponderating influence in a frequent representation of their peculiar emblem.



The cross or cruciform tree of a pyramidal shrine of this place forms an unexhausted theme for archaeological discussion; speculative theories have abounded, at first materially influenced by the rhapsodies of the European monks, who thought they saw in it a mystical manifestation of the true cross. During a century, an approach to a perfect comprehension of all that it signifies has made steady advance, and observations noted on our way hither will assist in an elucidation of some points still debated.

The emblematic figure of the Dresden Codex, a ponderous structure, is on these slabs reproduced in a refined though still more enigmatical form. The tendency there seen towards the St. Andrew's cross, which is equally with the Greek form a symbol of the serpent, is displaced here, and the entire conception of blended emblems is removed from the flowing manner of the hieratic writer and adapted to the angular shaping of the hieroglyphic sculptor, which treatment is likewise observable in the composition of the altar of the sun. However, this is not strictly adhered to in the district, as the foliated cross, the component parts being few, and there being no need for massing together or compression, exhibits a variety of outline which is an interesting example of a free style.

The cross in Central America represented the god of the air, rain and health: this was everywhere its simple meaning.

When the Muysacs would sacrifice to the god of the waters they extended cords across the tranquil depths of some lake, thus forming a gigantic cross, and at their point of intersection threw in offerings of gold, emeralds, and precious oils.

The arms of the cross were designed to point to the cardinal points of the compass, and represent the four winds, the rain bringers.\*

While the Greek cross was a much used and ancient symbol of the serpent god, others were employed—among them a part of the Maya sign *Chicchan*, which is according to Landa the second day of the month; also it means "to fill with water or plenty of water." It is partially cross-hatched, this signifying water, and the three marks on it mean "much or plenty of." The cross-hatching is very liberally dispersed throughout the monuments, slabs, and hieroglyphics. The slanting cross is commonly employed as an emblem of rain, showers, moisture; there is also the sign T which is connected with water, of which more hereafter.

The shrines of the various temples stood for the most part on a pyramid whose four sloping sides were encased in masonry. Of the Mexican pyramids the most accessible in the present day is that of Cholula, which has a church where the shrine stood, and from the platform outside a magnificent view is obtained of the Puebla valley, the three volcanoes, and the route, a depression between the mountains, taken by Cortes in his advance on the capital of Montezuma.

Stephens and Catherwood published the first important, because the most reliable, account of the Palenqué shrines, where they had much to do to clear away the forest trees and undergrowth hiding the ruins of the temples—a difficulty inseparable from this sort of discovery in the warmer parts of Mexico.

With their descriptions and drawings all Americanists are familiar, and the illustration of the cross altar slab needs no repetition, but portions of it are still unexplained, and the hieroglyphics, those for dates excepted, are undeciphered; consequently, discussion on various heads continues.

Dr. Brinton has held persistently to his view that this cruciform structure was the symbol of the four winds; it is, however, more than that, being a tree form after the manner

\* G. D. Brinton: "The Myths of the New World," 1868.



STELA 1, AT COPAN

*After a Drawing in the "Hojas Central-Americanas."*  
*A Cast at the South Kensington Museum.*





of the Lamina A in the blue book in which Señor Leopold Batres's report is contained, and is a "tree of life" in addition to being a symbol of the god of the air, with also the generative principle, both vegetable and animal, blended in its cruciform outline. Chavero argues in favour of the idea. Finding the cane or acalt in the composition of the stem, he pronounces for the existence of a representation of vegetable life, and fails in proving to be, what he is certain must be present, that is, the old *ceiba* or phallic idea,—having used Aztec aids only in his endeavour to reach the desired conclusion. With the Maya signs and codices aiding, the stem is found to be not "acalt" alone, but *Ahau* and *Yax* in combination, and emblematic of the vital force of mankind: while it is a coincidence that *ah*, which in the Maya tongue is the word for "masculine," in the Quiché language is "cane."

Dr. Rau did not accept the finding by which Dr. Brinton claimed that, the grotesque bird on the cross being a main feature in its composition, it was simply a rebus of the bird and serpent, conveying the idea of "the plumed serpent," and consequently the altar was erected to the god of the air, because at the base of the fabric there is a grotesque mask which did not look like an emblem of the serpent; and he discovered, on referring to the calendar cross of the Maya manuscript Fejervay, the same figure with the addition of two *fore feet*, but could not classify it.

The objection was good as to the mask, which is that of the sun, proven to be so by the manuscript, by the "sacred stone" and the clawed deity with serpent surroundings on the Santa Lucia slab.

The altar of the cross has therefore no particular reference to one deity, and is evidently a recognition of the gods in union, with a slight prominence given to the god of the air in one of his emblems—that of the masked trogon—more generally known by its Aztec name of *Quetzal*—of which, as it plays so important a part in Mexican religious history, a description is given.

The sacred bird of the Mayas, it has become associated with memorials to the Chan caste, it has been chosen as the emblem of the Mexican Republic, and so it has had both a religious and a political recognition. Its scientific name is *Pharomacrus mocinno*, belonging to the family of Trogons. It is scarcely possible for the imagination to conceive anything more rich and gorgeous than the golden green colour which adorns the principal part of the plumage of this splendid bird, or more elegant and graceful than the flowing plumes which sweep pendant from the lower part of the back, forming a long train of metallic brilliancy.

Although the long plumes were used to adorn the head-dresses of the ancient Mexicans, and at a later time were transmitted by the Spaniards to Europe, yet it is only recently that we have become acquainted with the entire bird. Considerable variations can be seen in the dimensions of the long caudal plumes, even in specimens all coming from the same country; some have central coverts as broad as the hand and a yard and a quarter long, whilst others are much narrower.\*



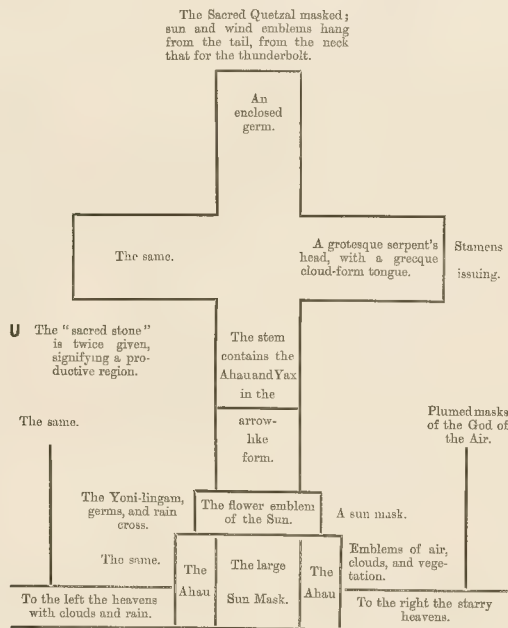
The Sacred Quetzal.

\* John Gould: "The Trogonidae." London, 1873.



H. W. Bates terms it the *Trogon resplendens*, with wings and back of the most brilliant emerald and gold, the belly of a fiery red, while the feathers, when fully grown, attain a length of three and a half feet. To us it is attractive owing to its plumage having been profusely used in the temple service, and as a sculptured ornament upon some of the larger highly decorated stellæ of Copan. The tail feathers are not its only remarkable feature; the curved plumes overlaying the breast feathers are a characteristic which the native artists have so reproduced in their somewhat grotesque resemblance of the bird that it is recognisable mainly by it, confirming the tradition concerning its intimate relation with religious rites and ceremonies; but, strange to say, its Maya name is not usual, it being popularly called by the term common with the Aztecs. Batres says "the head was placed in the plumed casque of the officiating priest," concerning which there is a doubt, it having been said of the representation of a bird with a formidable macaw-like beak, whereas the quetzal has a small and rather delicate bill.

For the sake of the comparison of ideas, suggestions are annexed in a diagram form of the principal clustered symbols of the Palemké Cross, it being the tree form and the equal cross of the four winds combined.



Hieroglyphic forms with masks represent the deities in the collections of the museums, and certain emblems being often repeated and agreeing with Landa's signs, the worth of some of them becomes established; and in connection with them are eye marks—that often added to the sun mask is a curved shoot, which is seen in the example at the base of the Palemké cross.

That the cross has reference in its four divisions to the seasons of the year is probable.


The initial of the first column of hieroglyphics upon the cross altar slab has the usual bracket form, in the centre of which is one of the many variations of *Ahau*. Brasseur gives to half of the bracket the interpretation "he who is," and Edward S. Holden supports this rendering. Should the employment of two denote the plural, we have "they who are" add the centre, "deities or lords"; the next glyph has a double *Ymix*—"of plenty," then follow two glyphs with the *Ahau* sign, which seem to be other titles, such as "lord of the air," "lord of the rainfall," the first having cloud-forms, the second being cross-hatched in allusion to water.

The view of more than one principle of nature being referred to is in a measure upheld by the germs in the next glyph, and by that in following order, which has a sun hand with a disc, accompanied by what may be termed the flower emblem of the sun. There are dates among the hieroglyphics amounting to about one-third of the whole.

The bird at the apex of the cross is an exaggerated representation in keeping with the bulky, widespreading and impossible-to-be-worn head ornaments bestowed by the sculptor priests as insignia of rank. The wearing of a mask heightens the mystery of the composition, and though a common practice with the sorcerers and priests, the origin of its adoption has not been satisfactorily accounted for.

A panel of sandstone affords an example of a mask, no doubt, like that which the Spaniards took exception to in New Mexico as resembling a pig. It does not occur often in this large form; it is, however, frequently used as a hieroglyphic, and its upturned nose or snout is a sure indication of reference being made to a god of benevolence—in fact, as far as this research into the Maya mysteries of prehistoric times has gone, all the idols have been well-disposed.

The background of the Copan panel has a square-cut rather cruciform outline, a figure of which Charnay gives a drawing with the note "*Croix semée sur la tunique de Quetzalcoatl et sur les palais de Mitla*," and, it may be added, is also upon the ruined temples of South America. Upon it is laid another foliated equal-limbed cross, which without hesitation is classed with the hinder one as being descriptive of clouds and wind; it forms an ornament behind a cross-legged personage, whose extraordinary mask is the salient feature of the conception.

It may be assumed, by this mask being distinctive and by finding it on various sculptures grouped with the wind and water emblems, that it is equivalent to the written sign  taken from the manuscripts,\* where it signified "running water." At the back of the mask is a wing denoting "swiftness"; it may have application to both water and wind. In later times it is united to the figures of rapidly-moving animals such as the deer and rabbit; the flowing sash of the seated figure has the cross-hatched



The Water God; one of the forms of *Kukulcan*.  
Cast from panel at Copan, South Kensington Museum.

\* MSS. Troano, p. 213.



pattern which meets us at every turn. A large hieroglyphic on the helm is fractured, a matter much to be deplored, as it might have solved the question as to whether Quiché or Maya phonetics are to be sought for on the monuments of the district. The image bristles with indications of being one of the manifestations of the Maya divinity *Kukulcan*.

Landa's "Relacion" mentions that a loaf of gourd seeds formed one of the presentations made to the idols. Loaves were unknown as bread. The contents of the bowl in the hand of the figure is not unlike a loaf, but the signification is apparent, mainly by the three dots, which undoubtedly may be taken to be *Ix*, which, with *Ymix*, is constantly in requisition; here, it should mean that which is prolific, or "fecundity," as it always has a special reference to the attribute of productiveness.

Stephens has made us familiar with the Shrine of the Sun in which most of the five emblems are conspicuously displayed that have already been enumerated when the better known Palemké Cross was considered, and the outer walls bear the image of priests of the water god. Suffice it to say the main forces here adored are those most material to the well-being of a people accustomed to peaceful and agricultural pursuits, and it is pleasant to suppose we are looking on the productions of a period in the Maya history when *Kukulcan* the winged serpent, or the caste of the winged serpent ruled—a time when human sacrifices were not offered. They appear in history under the Aztec name of Quetzalcoatl, a mythical personage, though in all probability the chief priest and king of the Chans, or Serpent tribe of whom it is said "He was the god of the air, and taught the people agriculture and other arts; famine was unknown, and the harvests were abundant; but after a time he was banished, his religion was overthrown, idols were set up again, and human sacrifices were offered, both of which he had abolished."

The prominent place attained to by the Serpent caste, as teachers of labour in all that increased the fertility of the soil, lends an additional interest to the sculptured records of the Palemké region, bearing testimony to the fact of the agricultural proclivities of the people. The slabs of the shrine of the Foliated Cross, of which we possess a moulding, are especially consecrated to the apparent deification of a personage, perhaps a chief priest. The composition has much in keeping with the other slabs; the sun, the lingam, the winds, are each and all represented in subordination to the main features of the cross, which are of a character eminently suitable for portraying luxurious growth, the increase of vitality in the produce of the fields; the leafy spreading outlines resembling the enveloping cover of the maize plant. The hieroglyphic columns begin with an initial signifying "the god of abundance," and **T** a sign for water is placed in brackets, regarding which it is suggested the interpretation should be "the chief, the lord of irrigation."

That irrigation and its attendant benefits had been brought into the Maya country is shown by the reports of Stephens and others, and the "aguada" or reservoirs remain in proof of the ancient practice of storing water for the purpose. To impress this upon the memory, the glyph might be vulgarized and called the tank hieroglyphic. A comparison of the glyph, which resembles a letter of the Latin alphabet, in its variable forms carved on many slabs gives rise to the idea of its having reference to the straight channels of stone through which the water was conducted, as it occasionally appears as a broad horizontal line from which two and even four lower lines are taken with above them two loops, that may indicate a water supply—it is also one of the emblems on a slab where the long-nosed idol has his ordinary sign of *ik* supplemented by this new form. Recognised and classified as a water sign by the learned, it had been transmitted through generations of Indians to be used

among the Moquis as described by J. G. Bourke, who shows that most of their relics considered sacred belonged to the water idol, and that the prehistoric race from whom they came had water reservoirs, excavated irrigating ditches, and utilized all water springs.

The foliated cross is on the wall of a structure designated a house, temple, or shrine, because the hieroglyphics on its slabs have, instead of the grotesque masks of idols, the profiles of persons with a physiognomy in common with the peculiar type of the priests, whose full-length figures are on other shrine slabs—that is, they have a receding brow and chin, large nose, and protruding lips. The profiles are in union with the emblems formerly set apart for the deity, and five of them bear emblematic or caste cheek marks; **IL** seems to be the more important, as it occurs again on a slab discovered at Usumacinta.



The Foliated Cross of Palenqué.

It has then to be considered whether this cross was erected to commemorate the deification of the Chan serpent priests or not, and whether they were elevated to any equal rank with the water god, the plumed serpent, the god of the air (synonymous terms) as a recognition of their ability in developing the natural resources of the country by tillage, irrigation, and the use of fertilizers. Should the idea gain acceptance that, next to the heat of



the sun and a seasonable rainfall, the successful experimental agriculture of the priests was looked upon as the development of a latent power, and that they in consequence claimed and received from the people a position as creators of marvels—the result of much observation and the calculations of cause and effect—it requires little exercise of the imagination to conceive that after the manner of the “medicine men,” they assumed a rank and importance as the personification of the deity, and, consequently, took unto themselves in the person of their pontiff or high priest the distinguishing emblems of the gods.

In this wise the human head of the foliated cross can be accounted for, and the same reasoning establishes a basis on which to found the hypothesis that it may be a representation of the priest who was the great head of the Serpent caste in the days of its influence. Being powerful here and holding sway in other districts, it may be that the mythical record is separated from the historical at this point, although after this period is passed by they blend again and cause perplexity until, retracing our steps, we reconsider the rise and progress of the nature worship among the Maya tribes, the middle period of Palenqué's domination, the failure of the Chan priests to gain a place at Cholula, and the migration to Uxmal, where, with considerable modification of their mystical emblems, they were exercising their craft and wielding power as late as the sixteenth century, and were not recognised because a continuity in their course had not been shown. The slabs of the priests' shrine, in their apparent allusion to the career of a sacerdotalist, places hero-worship and the worship of the old gods on the same footing, at least for a time; but, so far as research has gone, there was only this example of a saint or hero to whom a shrine was erected, and if the foliated cross be a memorial to the head of the Serpent caste—that is, to Quetzalcoatl—it is worthy of more than a passing attention. The fact of a record having been found in keeping with the accepted narrative regarding religious advance and a high culture having existed in Palenqué in ancient times is of exceeding interest. This trace of a personage like the one sought for, whose lofty reputation stands forward so prominently that he may be called the patron saint of the Mayas, should convince those who have discredited the myths.

Taking a glance over the slabs, it will be seen that on the right has, near the base, a representation of a large conch shell, which is confirmatory, in a slight degree, of the idea that the memorial was raised in commemoration of the excellent qualities and talents of a man and not to an idol; because it was the native custom in Peru to announce the approach of a man of rank to a village or town by blowing such a horn, in order that the people be warned to accord him a suitable reception. The horn is probably introduced here as an insignia of rank, and the inference deduced from it is that the personage, as a high priest, made progresses, and went about the country surrounded by pomp and circumstance, and accompanied by a numerous retinue of the inferior priests, among whom, in procession, he appeared raised on high. In the structure of this cross, predominance, however, is specially given to vegetation and agricultural methods, and naturally a salient position to the bird typical of “the plumed serpent” from whom the priests and people alike took their name. This custom of adopting a sectional name is still observed among the tribes of the North American continent. The bird has an appearance, in the pattern given by the sculptors, differing greatly from its normal type, and is almost identical in that respect with the best known cross of the shrines.

Brasseur says that while *can*, which also takes the forms *chan* and *kan*, was the generic name of the serpent, it had other meanings in the Maya tongue, and was employed to express wisdom, knowledge, opinion, speech, to know, to learn, to comprehend, all of which Chavero asserts would have application to the Chan priests, and *Ahcan* or *Ahchan* signified a man of

learning—literally, the serpent man, the learned man. When we take into account the magnitude of the power of the Chan priests, and their ability to draw the people together, holding them by a mysterious dread, levying a tax upon their superstitious fears, it must be acknowledged, as in addition to this they were the personification of wisdom and the rulers of the country, they played a *role* in the ancient history of Central America which affords a parallel, with the career of sacerdotalism in countries far removed from them, of a pagan influence in times prior to the Christian era, of which we read with wonder.

The learned Frenchman's vocabulary of the Maya tongue contains a word that if it could be followed in the past history to the date of its origin would tell us when agriculture was first carried on in Mexico under improved methods. *Ix-a-zal-noh* may not only be rendered "the agricultural books," but also it has a more extended application in the allusion to writings connected with agriculture and the fertilization of the land by the use of water and the contents of the intestines, thereby signifying that the teachers of agriculture, the Chan sect, had employed irrigation and had made use of the chemical properties of all refuse, they having attained to a knowledge far removed from the primitive and uncultivated condition of a savage race of men. Though the vocabulary is of modern compilation, we cannot forget it is of the language which was common to the Palémké district, and that its having been current in Yucatan was due to the departure of the Mayas from their ancient capital, and that this word came down from remote times; and Brasseur's rendering of the native ideas, being the result of a close study of the language while resident in the country on the special service of acquiring information, ought to have value.

The shrine of the foliated cross had not been discovered in the time of Stephens. He mentions the sun shrine and that of the cross as each having three doors, and another larger structure placed on the summit of a pyramid like the rest, its greater dimensions being at once seen by the five doors facing the visitor as he climbed the steep mound to the sacred building. The interior contained slabs of fourteen rows of hieroglyphics set in the wall—a number exceeding those of the smaller buildings. The great peculiarity in this shrine is the absence of life-like figures in relief, or of a cruciform figurative symbolic altar with officiating priests.

Catherwood exercised his skill in an endeavour to copy the hieroglyphics, and it is known that they are of the composition of others with which we are familiar at this place and Copan; still, nothing more can be ascertained until they are photographed. The building was by Stephens marked Casa No. 1, and the name of the "House of the Inscriptions" was given to it, as there was nothing about it to afford a better one. Had the initial glyph of the inscription been produced, a solution of the mystery hanging over this shrine might have been cleared away. With no light on the matter of its dedication it may be suggested this was the shrine of the "sacred stone," the place where it was adored as the symbol of the male and female principles of life. Its normal form was the oldest creation of the priesthood, and, therefore, to be held in superior sanctity and worshipped in a larger shrine than that of the other gods. That the stone was not discovered here *in situ* is not an objection to the idea, for it is known that sacred objects and portable idols were conveyed to hiding-places by the natives on the advent of the Spaniards, and that they were worshipped by the people subsequently, and that they clung to the pagan faith of their forefathers until one generation had passed away. It is possible the stone was, when carried with the tribe, removed from the central districts, and conveyed to their new shrine in Yucatan.

But if the idea of placing the "sacred stone" in the principal shrine is rejected, the remains of the universal emblems scattered about the larger building leave no doubt as to its



being a temple of the gods, and if the number of the entrance doors are evidence of anything, "the Five" may have been worshipped here, constituting Casa No. 1, the Tihoo of the district.

On the two piers or flat pillars between the five doors are stucco figures of a man and woman, both carrying a plump, well-fed child—a representation of progeny, it may be supposed, as the infants are in marked contrast to the figures offered by the priests of the smaller shrines, which are small, thin, masked mannikins, of which an example is found in the sceptre held in the hand of the huge so-called "Turtle" of Quirigua, where it is evidently a symbolic form bound to a wooden handle. The borders of these stucco piers have remains of symbols having the one tendency—that is, conveying the idea of plenty, abundance, the crosses of the



The winged Serpent God of Osocinga.

"god of the air" being among them, and the pediment contains the remains of feathers resembling those of the renowned winged time symbol of Osocinga, thus named in error because of its similarity to the ancient Egyptian model. In the Maya country it was the "plumed serpent," and a figure of nebulous clouds; the head of the reptile in this particular instance being put into the shade by the immense disproportion of the wings. A vein of humour runs through the artistic creations of the Maya priests, sometimes producing grotesque effects that are misleading.

The slab figures of the shrines of Palemké are a second edition, enlarged, revised, and rendered more mysterious, of the sculptured remains at Santa Lucia, acquainting us with the mannerism of the Chan priests, and that they, though giving some prominence to the worship of the "plumed serpent," rendered homage to five idols, typical of the male principle of life, the female principle, the vegetating germ, the god of the air and water, and the fertilizing sun-god. We now add to this category, as it is assumed, the foliated cross being taken as evidence of the fact that the high priest of the caste, at the time of the memorial being raised, was deified, and we think he was the personification of the deity *Kukulkan*, or



Quetzalcoatl, and representative of the most enlightened section of the Maya priesthood. The hieroglyphic on the conch shell is "Kukulkan" if read phonetically.

With this exception, no phonetic sound in Maya has been identified with the names of the deities—tradition being verified by a symbol which has been accepted in our time as being that set apart for certain idols; and it is remarkable that the phonetic should not aid in the matter of corroborating what we know about their titles.

The profile of a priest or priests was introduced among the hieroglyphics of Usumacinta, and from a slab removed from that place a drawing has been taken, to which, for the sake of comparison, an old symbol of the water god has been added: thus the symbols for wind and water may be seen attached to both the effigy of the priest and the idol.

Throughout the progress of the inquiry, so far, no stone record has been encountered, except the priest of Santa Lucia, bearing a knife that positively indicates the existence of human or other sacrifice. Tradition tells us the Chan priests prohibited the practice like the Buddhists, it



Hieroglyphics from the Usumacinta Slabs.

being inconsistent to adore life in the active creature and at the same time take it away by forcible means; yet the Usumacinta district has the self-immolation of the priests, the laceration of the tongue before the idol, the shedding of blood as acceptable to him, which leads to a belief in many ages being represented by the various carvings of the district.

The slabs offer examples in many instances of the deification of the serpent, and it is questionable whether they come before or after those of Palemké in date of execution. The prominence of this deity is in favour of their being less ancient; also, the introduction of the **T** hieroglyphic and the priestly profile indicates that they were made subsequent to the erection of the Priests' temple. One of these, a fragment, has the heads of two priests, the chief wearing a head-dress—decorated with a five-pointed star (Plate II.). Chavero gives this form as a symbolic ornament appended to an idol. Leopold Batres calls it an amulet, symbolical of the wind, which decorated the shield of the "plumed serpent"; the terracotta specimen he described having a cloud-form in the centre—this was the wind sign placed in a superior position. The five rays, as in the case of the decoration on the head of Montezuma, are now claimed for the five emblems of the "sacred stone"—the united god-head. The serpent often holds high place, bears the face of a man, and is shown adored by the priests. The ornate specimen of this god given here is unfortunately separated from his surroundings, but may be seen in Plate V. exalted in the air, while a priest bends before him.

The costumes of the priests, being scant, are for the most part like those of Palemké; some are attired in a mantle fastening at the neck and falling over the shoulders. A different dress was given to the women, attendants, singing girls, or nuns, of which the stucco of Casa 1, Palemké, and the column of Copan, are examples, distinguished by the skirt hanging from the waist.

Usumacinta is prolific in interesting relics. Plate I. serves to introduce again the discussion as to the use of the mannikin borne in the arms of the high priest of the Palemké cross, and likewise by the officiating personage of the foliated cross.

It has been shown that the gods were worshipped with masks or other symbols held in the hands of the priest; the sun and the serpent long-nosed mask represented two powers, and the remaining three deities, those of the male and female principles of life, whether it had reference to human, insect, or vegetable vitality, may have found expression in this mannikin figure, which may not be a child offered as a sacrifice, but a symbolical figure, as the arms and legs are marked with the concealed germ emblem.

Like many Maya sculptures of persons devoted to sacerdotalism, the priests are carrying impossible head-dresses; the larger they were, the greater the rank of the wearer. The whole of the ornamentation is a mass of emblems. All the flying ends that are not feathers represent the wind, the quetzal feathers the serpent, as do the cross-hatched spots typify him and his gift—water; and his pig-face or snout is there. The huge grecque on the head of the chief personage is a water-bearing cloud—a form in later days made angular when sculptured; the breastplates and girdles worn have full-face sun masks. The larger sun mask is carried on the left arm of the taller priest, who wears above the girdle a plaque, from both sides of which issue the "yoni-lingam" sign. The slanting rain cross is in the end of the girdle-sash, and the "olin," or thunder and earthquake sign, is the square-cornered, slightly oblique, erect pattern at the back of the grecque of the head-dress.



Kukulcan. Part of a Copan Slab.  
Maudslayi.



The initial letter of the hieroglyphics is in the lower right corner; it has the priestly Chan profile, with the distinguishing cheek-mark. Immediately behind this mark is the hieroglyphic and also hieratic sign for *Ahan*, in this connection utilized as expressing "lord or chief." Among the component parts of the underlying glyphs the T sign, with two perpendicular supports, is seen; occasionally it has four. On its left is the sign *ik*, accepted on sculptures and in the manuscripts as that of *Kukulcan*, otherwise "Quetzalcoatl."

Plate II. is of a stone-chiselled slab from Usumacinta, the preceding plate having shown rubbed work. Two priests stand face to face, as on the Palemké slabs; the chief has a head-dress of feathers and bands; curves or serpent-signs are dotted with the usual water-mark; there is a five-pointed star, the centre a concentric sun-circle, as a frontal decoration; beneath, touching the brow, is a diminutive sun emblem; the ears are made a support for small emblems. The breast ornament is circular and on it is a squat bearded figure. Is this the famous Quetzalcoatl? The staff has on the upper ornament indentations common to sacred staves, etc., etc., used by the Peruvians and Aztecs—a sun symbol apparently. The assistant priest has the same below the large cross-hatched top plume; from the hair tuft on his forehead a band of sun-cross ornaments is taken round the head. This Santa Lucia loop-cross with, as a centre, the concentric circles of the sun, is to be noted and compared with the large sculptured mask ornaments of the temples of Yucatan.

The dedicatory inscription between the staff and the assistant priest's head has the Chan effigy; the second and third glyphs have each the *Kukulcan* and the irrigation signs placed side by side; T (tanks) is in the third; *Ymix* is in the fourth glyph, the latter one of the hieroglyphics for what is prolific; the whole, freely rendered, being "Kukulcan or Quetzalcoatl, the lord of rain and running waters—Kukulcan, the maker of reservoirs and water supplies; Kukulcan, the bountiful." Inscribed in praise of the Serpent caste.

Opinions differ as to the chronological order of the sculptured remains of the temples, rendering the development of artistic design the one guide to follow, and if the low relief carvings of Santa Lucia and Palemké followed rock tracings, the rounder outline, the approach to the statuesque, comes next.

This exists at Copan, and though long known some of the art treasures of this district have lately been presented to the world in a restored manner by Mr. A. P. Maudslay, who, having given casts to the national collection, has, also, published drawings with the details of the decayed sculpture renewed—the work is excellent, being accurate in the smallest detail, and the artists are entitled to the highest commendation.\* A recent communication to *Science* alludes to the damaged and disfigured condition of many of the ancient buildings and sculptures of Yucatan and Central America, and as in all ancient ruined cities the masonry of the pyramidal and other structures are being used by the modern builder. The Uxmal temples are sharing the common fate, the stelæ of Copan have been wantonly smashed, the remains at Quirigua are as others have been, marked with the names of foreign visitors, and even the isolated idols of Zapatero, on the islands of Lake Nicaragua, are defaced by them and native vandals. This gives increased value and interest to the drawings made at the South Kensington Museum; a few of them are by permission reproduced here, and it is to be regretted that the author in his text has not seen his way to describe them more fully. An ornament that had fallen from the wall of a stairway leading up to a temple at Copan is shown below, and partakes of more roundness than the conceptions of Palemké, an advance

\* Godman and Silvan: "Biologia Centrali-Americana." Archaeology, 1880-93. Illustrated by Mr. Edwin J. Lambert and Miss A. Hunter.

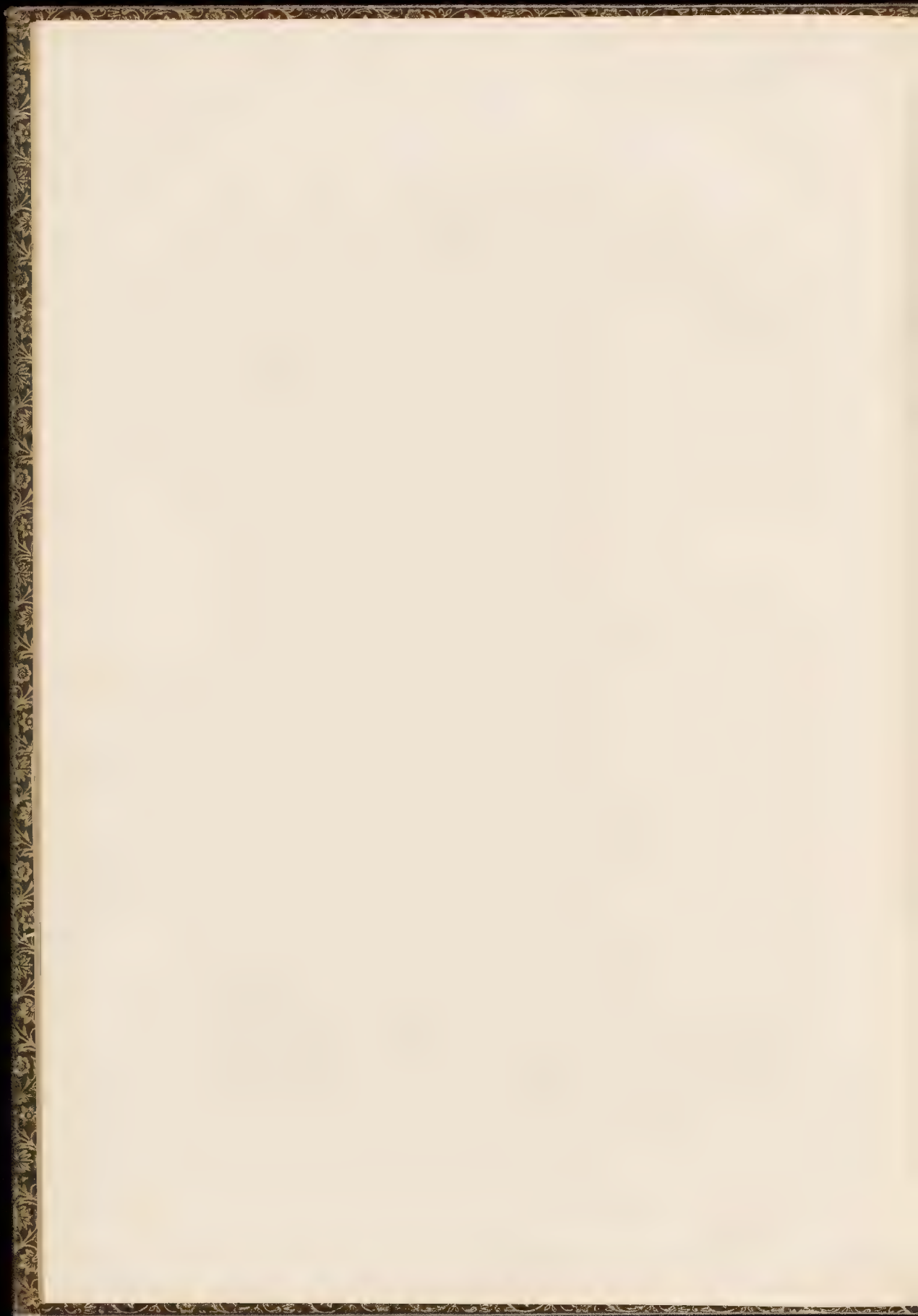


STELA A, AT COPAN.

After a drawing in the "Biologos Centralis Americanae"

A Cast at the South Kensington Museum.





in the artistic treatment of the subject, presenting an unfamiliar outline; however, it differs but little from what has been previously met with, although reminding one of the androgynous figures of another hemisphere. With them it has nothing in common, except in structural form; as to the motive of each, that is another matter. Beyond the American boundary it is undesirable to go, as to prove the universality of ideas is not our object, the quest being in search of the local evolution of religious sentiment.

At Santa Lucia the sun god had a strong masculine face, which, as we shall see, is replaced by one more youthful, a mannerism to be noticed in the larger figures of the stelæ. The Sphinx and Diana of the Ephesians naturally come to the mind as figurative of many attributes, but such a vision is not American in origin, and extraneous promptings are needless, as the Maya creation has within itself the sacred symbols explanatory of its purport.

The body of this figure of a quadruped is that of an enlarged sun figure, in combination as to the under part with a serpent, between whose gaping jaws the head of the principal, the quadrupedal part, appears;

wind, cloud, and cross-hatched serpent and water marks are behind the head; also an S sign. Above is an extended palm or sun emblem, and the wing of the wind. On the back of the body are three concentric



*Kinich-Ahau.* Ornament on a stairway at Copan. Maudslayi.

tric circles or sun tokens, arranged as the dots are in the Maya written sign for *Ix*—the eleventh day of the month—which, according to Landa and other authorities, is “fecundity,” when interpreted not as a calendar sign, but a book sign; moreover, it is unquestionably derived from the written sign *Ahau*. Brasseur says the feminine was originally expressed by a small circle, and this mark it is satisfactory to know, though not observed by him and others, appears in the centre of a sacred obelisk and on the head of the sole female statue at Copan. The upper dots of *Ix* seem to signify the masculine, always placed above. The three eventually were in general use as expressive of the union of the sexes, the multiplication of species, fructification, and the like.

In the rear of the recumbent figure is a group of symbols: the propagating element is observed in the sign *Yax*, equivalent to *Ahau*, which held both sexes in its composition; the slanting rain cross with cloud and wind forms are behind on the left; and in the centre is a seed germ, an enclosed embryo, having on the right the S form occurring the second time, and signifying life, the beginning, the origin of things. The principal, the overshadowing figure of the combination, is undoubtedly *Kinich-Ahau*, the god or the lord with the face of the sun, of which Chavero has a different example, accompanied by the like grouped emblems that are found in this.

Referring back to this writer’s “cruz de serpientes,” it will be observed that, simple as it is, there are the same features in it—the cross for the four winds, the serpent for the water, and rays for the sun, before which last-named *Yax* is placed as the embodiment of vegetation, and the male and female principles of life. The wide difference of the treatment of the subject when a comparison is made between the “cruz” and the Copan figure affords a notion of how a cursory examination would hardly betray the existence of the five emblems of the “sacred stone” in two figures so dissimilar in outline.



With the increase of the population and the acquisition of wealth acquired by the improved cultivation of the soil, the coffers of the priesthood would be replenished. The importance of the cities and the prosperity of the times may be measured by the remains of the temples, which, being strongly built, resisted the ravages of a tropical climate long after the native houses constructed of weaker materials had crumbled into shapeless heaps.

The few Copan slabs known are of inferior workmanship to the stelæ, and seem to be of a much earlier date. The practices of this place show dissimilarity with others near, as there are many altars, incense burners, and serpent-formed seats, all of which being placed near to the carved monoliths tend to the supposition that, occasionally at least, certain observances and priestly ceremonies were conducted in the open air.

The hieroglyphics on these monuments are not decipherable to the extent of making their whole signification evident, but the major part of the inscriptions begin with the serpent head initial, followed by five heads of the masked deities, all symbolical; after which follows a priestly profile of the caste seen at Palenqué, and previously alluded to as Chans, as though this sixth, a priest, now ranked as a god, and was in great repute at Copan.

Writers on the religious history of the Mayas have made much of some of the natural history objects introduced as symbols, but one alone should take a conspicuous place as pre-eminently above the rest as symbolic of a god, and that is the Serpent. Of birds attached to the symbolism connected with the sun worship, two sorts of macaw, one crested, are among the hieroglyphics, and are conspicuous in the cruciform Fejervay calendar; the uncrested variety is grotesquely adapted to the decoration of the upper part of Stela B at Copan. Its gigantic proportions and elongated beak gave rise to the notion that it represented an elephant, the granulations round the eye proclaim it to be a bird-head monstrosity, artificially conceived, then modelled, and wrought by the sculptor's art into an ornament; it bears the cup and groove symbol, perhaps it is that of the sun—noticed as one of the chief's decorations at Santa Lucia. The crested bird here given has a scroll with it bearing the sun-flower, and the small macaw's head has among the granulations of the loose skin of the head and neck the germ typical of the sun god; these bright plumaged birds being of the "Ara" species, whose feathers and heads adorned the costumes of the priests, and they, so some accounts relate, were at certain seasons worshipped as personifying the idol.



Bird figures as sun symbols.

The Copan altar, drawn by Catherwood and others as the most conspicuous and bold example of carving, is the largest there. It has huge grinning sun masks, whose eyes bear the outline of the sun-flower, the serpent intertwines, having hooked teeth,—at once detected, and other emblems proclaim the altar to be dedicated to the five gods; the upper corner, also, has a U form in which are five concentric circles, that, taking the Nantzitlan figure as an example of "a place of," reads *Tihoo*—"a place of," or say, dedicated to "the Five."

Other altars are less suggestive, though devoted to the worship of the same idols, as shown by the masks of the hieroglyphics covering them; on one, priests act as supporters. A door-step has similar seated figures; each wears on the breast large symbolic elaborately carved ornaments of the sun and the other deities. A bunch of berries held in the hand of a priest has eighteen stalks, the number of days in a month.

The incense burners are also one and all set apart for the worship of some of these gods. The example attracting attention being shaped like a man's head with the T marks

on the cheeks, almost a fac-simile of the colossal example left by the Incas in Peru, which is said to have formed the outlet of an aqueduct. This falls in very exactly with the decision come to as to the Floriated Cross having been erected in commemoration of the establishment of irrigation works, a conclusion receiving additional confirmation from the discovery during the progress of this investigation of a drawing\* of a high priest. He heads a procession at the inauguration of new channels for a water supply, with behind him a man blowing a conch shell which, it will be remembered, is an insignia of rank carved on the Palemké slab.

Having rather hastily scanned the composition of the Floriated Cross, it is desirable to note in alluding to it again, that it contains in its base, above the sun mask, the flower emblem of the idol in an altered style which is perpetuated. It has occasionally puzzled archaeologists. E. S. Holden says it relates to "hades," he observing that it was carved as a displayed figure on the under part of the colossal Aztec idol *Michtlanteuhtli*, now in Mexico, to which carving Gama assigns the name of *Tzontemec*, namely, a figure of the sun, and Chavero supports the last-named authority. Thus it is seen that considerable confusion and difference of opinion occurs with respect to both the names of the gods and their symbols outside the Maya country, to be got rid of by careful comparison; however, in this case it is abundantly clear that the emblem is identical with that of Palemké, and by this proof we know was in vogue long after the glories of the ancient cities had passed away.



Religious ceremony, opening of an aqueduct. Chavero.

Again, the assistant priest of the cross has a medallion ornament which on examination proves to contain **T** shapes, four in number, with the two supporting irrigating lines. The emblem is placed in the favoured position held previously by the insignia belonging to the principal idol; just as in the initial glyph of the inscription it takes the place of the mask of a god, but later, in the initial glyphs it is superseded and gives place to a sheepish-looking priest's head. However, the **T** was received into the ideographic forms and became a hieroglyphic either alone or in combination with other forms of hieratic writing and sculpture, perplexing Brasseur.

Returning to the temple of Copan, the inner doorway of a court being reached, huge grotesque figures support the lintel, which is mainly decorated with heavy serpent inter-twinings; three occupy the centre, and make the mystic three of abundance, the prolific emblem, usually sprinkled over the monuments in figures of minute proportion;—in this case it is colossal and of a form which conveys an intensity, a depth of expression. Instead of three dots or small circles, a notable sign is introduced, the **o** emblem, signifying "life, the origin of things," conspicuous in the Manuscript Troano as the sign of an idol. The serpent held an important place still, though he aided germination, as the god of the air and water, he was not the source of life; therefore, the "sacred stone," the first cause, may have been in this temple with priests of the various castes in attendance. The colossal figures acting as pillars and doorkeepers stand upon the large sun mask.

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Pursuing an inquiry by comparison into the actual worth of the material suitable for a record of the Maya hieratic history to be found on the monuments, reiteration is unavoidable, and those who have studied day by day the casts and photographs available for artistic purposes can testify to the sameness of the ideas expressed by the designers. Modification

\* Chavero: "Mexico a traves de los siglos."







of the archaic is sometimes easy to detect, though frequently strangely altered, evidence of the preservation of the ancient foundation work thinly veiled by a little changeful religious mystery, a very ordinary device of priestcraft.

The larger monuments of Copan have been supposed to represent, if not the Maya deities at least personages who were worthies, to whom adoration was given, a hero-worship concerning which the learned desire to find out the truth.

The hieroglyphics are not all understood—nevertheless, the difficulty barring the way to a solution of the mystery enveloping these colossal profusely carved obelisks is dispelled by a knowledge of the name or classification that may with certainty be given to the initial glyph. Standing at the head of inscriptions, it is in all respects as helpful to their classification and nomenclature as the head stamped upon an ancient coin, to which in its profile outline it bears a likeness.

The spreading feathers of the head-dress of these figures, and their youthful, almost womanly aspect does not necessarily cause them to be called feminine. Among the many stelæ, one only represents a woman, she being clad in a skirt; the remainder have the legs partially bare from above the knee and are of the masculine order and youthful, being typical of life and activity. Suggestions as to the reason of the erection of the stelæ, and remarks upon the emblems will be given in the hope that, as additions to the observations of other antiquarians, they may be useful.

With the plates of the "Biologia Centrali-Americana"—Archæology—to refer to, the reader can trace all the carved symbols alluded to in the following descriptions, as the Copan monoliths are covered with them in bold outline showing little variation throughout the entire group. With the exception of two they appear to be monuments raised to commemorate the power and position of the Chan caste of astrologers, medicine men, or priests, whose costumes and head-dresses are transmitted to us in an exaggerated and exceedingly ornate manner far exceeding the reality. One statue is specially remarkable as being in combination with a deity, a recognition of the masculine element in the principle of life; another, just as specially set apart is devoted to the female principle. The preponderance of the memorials of all descriptions are set up to the Chans, and, probably, when we can decipher the inscriptions, their general tendency being seen by the symbols employed to be the same, all of them will prove to have been erected on the occasion of either the consecration of a new head of the priesthood, or what is more likely, when the country rejoiced, having gathered a harvest of great abundance under their guidance and teaching, these stelæ were erected to do honour to both the priests and the gods. The latter we have brought with us so far. The most apt Americanist will hardly discover other symbolized deities, or be able to increase the number materially until more recent and historic times. The slabs of Palenqué and the stelæ of Copan are a manifestation of the same sentiment which holds good, though the expression of it in the artistic treatment has undergone modifications.

*Stela I* (Plate III.) is of exceptional interest, as it represents a male figure without the usual feather  head-dress. The uppermost head-band bears twice the Maya hieratic written sign  *Ah*, masculine; above it is *yax*; the rain cross, and the three dots are *ix*, fecundity ; feathers, the serpent's emblem, are right and left of the flower-like sun symbol,  which ought to have five rings. The ears are marked in multiples of three, clouds are on the brow, the germinating mark of the sun is in the eye, the four dots of the wind are below the eye, and above the elbows are serpents' heads with large hooked teeth; from them issue sun masks, on which the curved lines are

common as eye-marks, and are thought to signify radiant "light." Under the chin is a curved form that is associated with high dignity, perhaps regal power. It is on the quetzal perched on the crosses, and Aubin states it was a phonetic hieroglyph of Colhuacan, the Aztec name of the serpent god. The bracelets and anklets have the slanting rain cross, with four sun circles. The girdle masks are of the sun, with the peculiarity of a protruding square tooth—a mannerism of this place. The centre mask has a cross-hatched beard, while the same marking is on most of the pendant pouches; three in the centre have the sign *Ah* placed horizontally, in which position they are seen on the small side bands of the head-dress. At the feet two crested serpents' heads rest on a plinth bearing the marks of the plumed serpent.

This obelisk is a memorial in recognition of the sun god, priests or men, and the serpent, the first-named receiving the greater recognition, indicated by the initial glyph of the inscription being his, which may be read "he who is the sun god," in alliance with the god of the air and men.

This initial glyph of a profile of the sun god with a protruding tongue, the features being fashioned after the type of the priestly caste, appears as though they had aspired to an authority beyond that acquired by the Chans, and encroached upon another sectional domination. The Cholula conflict was doubtless between this caste and the priests of the sun; the latter apparently remained in the northern territory while the Chans went west.

Impish figures of priests, masked and unmasked, are dispersed throughout and modelled into the many parts of these singularly arranged emblematic memorials, it would seem without any express intention, other than to show the costumes, masks, and emblems worn by the temple attendants, who at this period, probably, in idolatrous processions appeared exactly as the carvings have them, wearing curious peaked caps, long-nosed and other masks, all more or less typical of the idols. Stephens, looking on during a festival held in honour of the Virgin at Guatemala, noticed that the procession of ecclesiastics, choir-boys, saintly images, and the inhabitants did not lack a reminiscence of past days and native customs, in that a number of Indians formed part of the spectacle, who attired in fantastic costumes and masked danced along, probably as the pagan priests of old did; but in this case they were known as "the devils"—a term of reproach the Church was likely to bestow upon everything connected with heathen, devilish, idolatrous practices and ceremonies. One of the early Spanish historians relates how that at certain seasons, at an idol's festival, the image had attached to it images with hideous faces.

The stone records of the various parts of the Maya country, concerning which we have information, have placed before us nothing of an unpleasant nature hitherto; still, war and pestilence, and scenes to us unfamiliar and of a character in keeping with paganism, were part of the life of these people, and atrocities may have been perpetrated of which we, knowing nothing, must still suppose to have been existent to a greater or less extent, as it is beyond belief that the narratives of the discoverers of Mexico had no application or relation to a pre-existent state of things.

A slab from Copan, in the South Kensington collection, relates that prosperity and heavenly blessings were mingled with drawbacks, and that life was chequered even in this favoured region, announced to us in an unobtrusive manner as though disaster merited anything but an ostentatious memorial—it is roughly graven on a small stone. A priestly figure with a warrior's eagle feathers in his helm presents an offering, that of a fish, one would think in derision, as the inscription states that it is a ceremony after an inundation.



Passing the first hieroglyphic as not comprehended, the next is *Chicchan*, received in the hieratic writing as one form of the sign conveying the idea "full of water," the cross-hatching being the water; previous remarks have explained the dots. Then comes the



Record of an inundation

hieroglyphic, that is, the sculptured form of the word given by Landa; in the written form, it is a mask containing three dots and a water mark. Whereas the dots are placed outside doubled, the mask is that of a water god, one of his styles known by the serpent-like teeth, and flanking it on the left is a bracket, six lobed, read in initial glyph as "abundance," below which is a sign rather like Brasseur's water sign the base is the rain-cross emblem; the entire record being a triple declaration of an overflow of a river or an inundation caused by bad weather.

Cyrus Thomas has lately deciphered a short record from the Dresden Codex on a similar subject; compared, the hieroglyphics now inserted are plainer and more emphatic in expression than the manuscript; in both cases, it is difficult to judge to what degree the evident interpretation can be amplified without departing from its original simplicity.

*Stela H*, a female figure, has a head-dress made up of an unusual quantity of feathers, with a top centre ornament of pointers over a sun mask with calculiform ear-drops—the germ is in the eye. Grotesque serpents' jaws flank it, projecting outwards; cross-hatched tassels hang near. The hands support a cylinder, possibly a native form of drum, from which issue the usual grotesque serpents' heads. At the elbows are masks representing running water, and the sun mask is in the girdle. The skirt has a raised crossed pattern of five parts, similar to the Casa No. 1 female skirt at Palemké; on the upper part of the large front tassel is a sun mask, the bottom has the cross-hatched rain or serpent masks, which, also, are visible on the spots of the skirt; these last are in sixes, multiples of three, being *Ix*, found on every statue, the repetition giving a superlative sense. These spots are of frequent occurrence on the priestly garments. More than one writer describes them as leopard skin; the uniformity of their number and the regularity of their arrangement is opposed to the idea.

The crossed pattern of five parts on the skirt resembles one on the Calender Stone in Mexico city, in that relation and in the hieratic signs it has been accepted as symbolic of the heavens, and as to the number of five, the god-head is perhaps typified in it. The absence of an initial glyph to the inscription is noteworthy; apparently, the female principle received inferior recognition, the stamp of deification is wanting, the profile is purposely omitted; the classifying emblem of the sex is on the back of the figure, grouped with the ordinary symbols. Mr. Maudslay has displaced this with the sun mask in his small drawing, an omission destructive of the unity of the design, as it is a group of the symbols of the five gods in combination, and they should remain together.

Brasseur again comes in as an aid to the classification of symbols, as the topmost of this pile of types is the horse-shoe form—the Maya *yoní*—with the little circle or hole explained by the learned abbé to be a feminine sign; it is placed above a sun mask, with clouds in the corners of the mouth; beneath are the emblems of the base of the Cross of Palemké.

The *yax* erect, the small sun mask, the rain cross, the *ix* dots, the wind flying sign to the right; there are four wind circles in a row, the sun-flower, the large grinning sun mask; these complete the hieratic blending. Stela I has a slightly varied grouping of these symbols as the uppermost ornament; there the quetzal breast feathers curve round *yax*, and the *yon*i is superseded by *ix*, the three dots, or two principles. The abbé considered the structure of the Maya language was evidence of the woman having occupied a position inferior to the man.

Following Mr. Maudslay's alphabetical arrangement of the stelæ and altars, adding the explanation given below, the reader will observe more readily than by a lengthy description of the several monuments how large a place the serpent god, *Kukulcan*, occupied in the public mind. Assuming that there was reverence given to all the idols, the fact of the beginning of inscriptions having his special symbol being more general makes him the chief deity of this part of the country.



Cluster of Symbols.

The dedications of the monuments of Copan classified by deciphering the initial glyphs.

STELA A.—To the serpent god of fruitfulness.

„ B.—Idem.

„ C.—To the Chan priests and the water god, propagators of fish.

„ D.—To the Chan priests, lords of the fish ponds.

ALTAR D.—A horse-shoe dedication to the five gods.

„ E.—He who is of the air and water, the serpent god.

STELA F.—To the serpent god of fruitfulness.

„ I.—To the sun and air god, and the principles of productiveness.

„ J.—To the serpent god of vegetating abundance, and the Chan priest gods of agriculture.

ALTAR K.—To the sun god.

STELA M.—He who is the serpent god of abundance.

„ N.—Obliterated—has a curve, likely a Chan priest.

„ P.—Doubtful—either the sun or a Chan priest.

ALTAR S.—The serpent god of fruitfulness.

STELA H.—A female productive goddess, without a title.

The serpent god and the Chan priests are certainly the most favoured; thus Copan affords additional data in support of the view of their hierarchical supremacy, and of the domination of Quetzalcoatl having lasted among the central tribes during a lengthy period. A priest of this district wears a hat as huge as an umbrella, still preserved among the costumes worn by the Indians on occasions when ancient dances are performed, and it exists in Peru.

It will be unnecessary to describe in detail the symbolism of all the stelæ. Having mentioned two of a special character, the third and last introduced here is of what may be termed the Chan type of memorial at Copan. In which beautiful restoration allowance must be made for the refined modern touch of our artists. For the mannerism of the ancient



sculptors the photographs provide an index. When it is remembered stone implements were used, metal tools being unknown, their work under the circumstances cannot but be pronounced exceedingly clever. While Copan is famed for them, the sole statues at Palenqué are two exactly alike, of which Waldeck wrote, and Stephens following him describes the one remaining unbroken as having in the lower part of the dress "an unfortunate resemblance to modern pantaloons." This is an interesting allusion, as it suggests that these statues were roughly hewn prior to their erection—the unfinished limbs, hands, feet, and the ornamental details being completed when the pillar figure was in its place, enveloped with scaffolding.

*Stela A* (Plate IV.) is a priestly figure having the top of the head-dress surmounted by plumes of air and cloud forms placed in the sun mask; right and left are serpents' grotesque extended jaws; the body of the creature on either side is held by seated masked imps, no doubt attendant priests of the sun, whose feet rest on a still more elongated jaw of the same sort that rises from a cylinder held in the hands. The edge of the other part of the stela is decorated with the feathers of the quetzal—resting on the head are the high overlaid ornaments like a plait, in the Aztec language the *olin*, or thunder, a symbol of the god of the air; the hair is long, after the manner of the priests in the Foliated Cross, conclusive of a Chan being before us, as the hieroglyphic profiles of the idols are without it. The germs on the forehead are probably roots striking downwards, the bracelets have the ordinary sun germ, youthful masks adorn the belt, with loops between having a *yum* and *yin* centre, the girdle has the rain cross, to the left a sign much like Brasseur's symbol of life, the large pouches have the concealed germ or embryo, the small are cross-hatched. At the knees is a shortened sun mask with curling clouds. Four masks of the same idol in pairs, one on the other, are at the side behind the feet, the older above the later style; the last mentioned has both the tongue and a square tooth protruding.

The initial of the inscription is the serpent mask with the brackets of "abundance," which brace it and the *Ahau* glyph, "lord or chief," together. The fifty-one double hieroglyphics following each contain a reference either to the idols or abundance. No. 49 has the horse-shoe mark designating cultivated land.

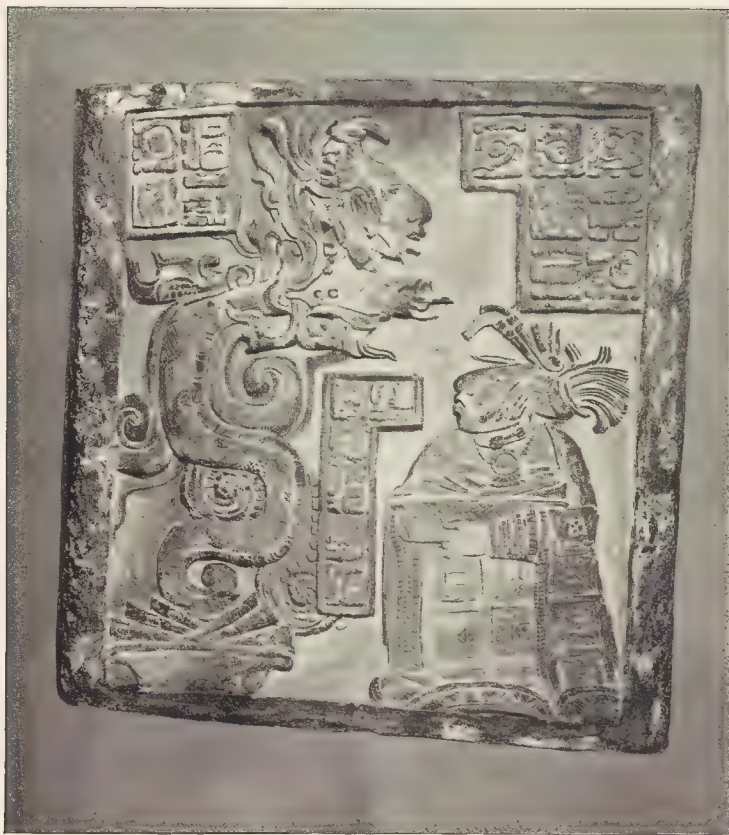
The peculiarities to be noticed on the stelæ not specially described are, that *Stela B* has a gigantic pair of macaw heads with the upper mandible lengthened to the proportion of an elephant's trunk. *Stela D*, instead of a profile initial glyph, has the full figure of an active-looking priest evidently not engaged in ceremonial service, but in agricultural pursuits or fishing.

The symbols are so various on the larger stelæ and the combinations so many, that there is a field little known open for the discoverer. The entire system of their creation revolves round a few old signs, and they the most primitive; occasionally others of newer construction take their place and seem to have equal value, again to give place to an old form which crops up most unexpectedly.

The flattened heads of the Maya priests, their peculiar profile and type is not mythical. Señor Batres finds it is not extinct, and has brought forward living examples of the same cranial angle and general appearance of a Zapotec tribe in the State of Oaxaca.

A course north-east takes us to Quirigua, a place of important ancient sculptured monuments of a size exceeding any others. The South Kensington Museum is the fortunate possessor of completed casts of the two principal, which, with other casts not in position, are the best set placed before the public, and are moreover not exhibited in other countries.

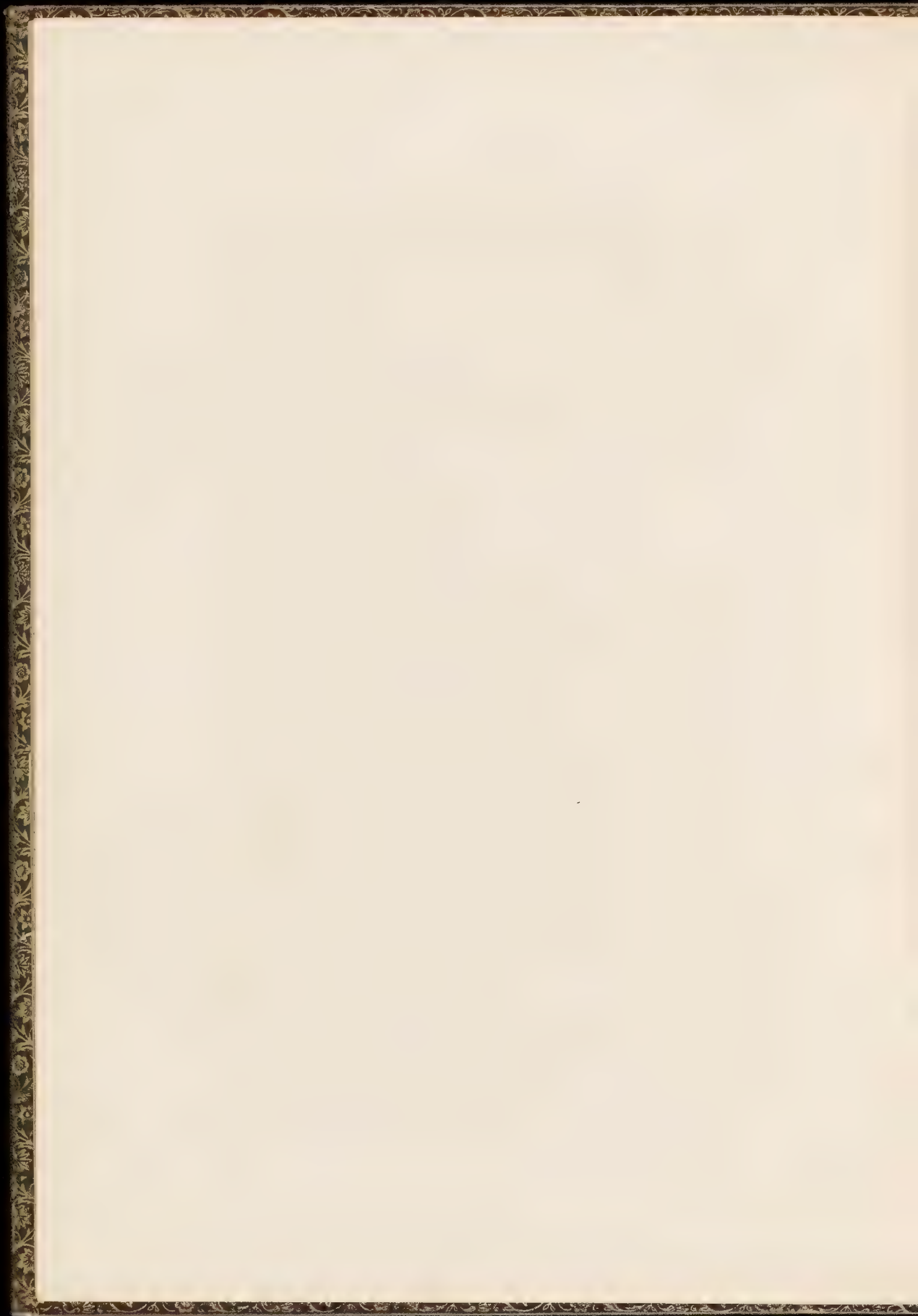
The "Turtle" is the most richly carved boulder stone extant, wrought into artistic shapes, enriched by medallions and profiles; many *katuns* of hieroglyphics are dispersed over




KUKULCAN, —AND A PRIEST PROVIDED WITH TONGUE CUTTERS.

*The Slab from Uxmalata is at South Kensington.*





its huge bulk. It is like the altars or seats, provided with two heads, and the labour expended upon it is in excess of any bestowed upon objects found elsewhere in Mexico, unless the Uxmal temples are to be excepted.

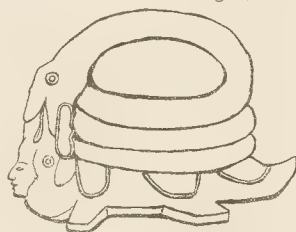
A crowned or much-ornamented youthful figure sits holding emblems, one a mannikin, of the identical style of Palenqué, held like a sceptre erect, the other sceptre held down has a serpent's head with long teeth—this hand also grasps an old-fashioned sun mask, and on the head and body are displayed the symbols we have seen on other monuments. The personage sits in the gaping jaws of a large serpent—a veritable monster, the entire mass being of a bulky measurement, that is about ten feet wide, by twelve feet in length, and at the highest nearly nine feet; the unseen top is carved as carefully as that portion in full view. The serpent is in the twists of its great length and bulk intertwined with others of the same genus; their eyes alone tell the story of their origin. Measuring a foot in diameter, they are hieroglyphic signs with the rain cross, abundant evidence of the presence of the water god, the benevolent, the fertilizing one, to whom with the Chans so much reverence was shown at Copan, about sixty miles distant. One of the hieroglyphics,  *imix*, means literally a woman's full breast, which was a model for the hieroglyphic constantly introduced as a symbol of fulness and plenty, and is often made an initial glyph as an old and expressive one. Here it is accompanied by a springing germ, and a triangular group of dots; similar dots, all multiples of three, surround them. The triangular form and the hieroglyphic itself are assumed to be figurative of maize or corn, as in the Maya writings, and in the formation of Aztec names for the rural districts they bear that construction.

The name assigned to this interesting monument, whether obtained from native sources or given at haphazard, might fairly remain without alteration, though additions have to be made, and a Maya term more suitable and dignified given to it, will enable the idol to be placed conspicuously on the name-roll of the Maya deities.

The various authorities quoted by Bancroft differ as to the order these Quiriguan relics should take in history—they noticed the hieroglyphics were identical with those of Palenqué and Copan, but had no hope of discovering their intention; leaving the controversial arena open for the first person who dares to enter it.

Fortunately, in both pagan and Christian countries, when sacred colossal effigies, even in small number exist, those of a convenient size that had been used for the purposes of private devotion are sure to be found, and these, with the learned French abbe's invaluable help, will do away with the difficulty of dealing with the nature of the antiquities of this section of the country.

The expression "eye of the sun," according to Landa, has a deeper sense than at first appears, as his references to it would read thus as applied to our favourite deity:—"The serpent; the heart of the lakes; the heart of the sea; the master of the blue surface (heaven);—to *Ahau*; the heart of the earth; the creator; those which give being; those which engender." Thus the essence of things is expressed, and the figurative eye, symbolically marked, when deciphering requires, as do many hieroglyphics, much breadth of expression. So we may presume that in a combination of the character of the "turtle," a youthful figure typifies a robust, a healthy state—but the bulk of the massed form is the chief thing to be considered; here, it is the



*Yax-coc-Ahmut; a terracotta.*

earth, otherwise the Tortoise which needs moisture, and, Is not the turtle a denizen of the sea? As the tortoise hibernates, it may have been chosen as typical of the winter sleep common to it and the vegetation of the earth.

Père Ligana writes of a deity hardly removed from the Five, he having their attributes. He was called *Yax-coc-Ahmüt* and *Itzamna*. We are now entering upon the consideration of new combinations added to the old, and there is a satisfaction in our knowing beforehand that this grafting process does not obliterate or destroy the old worthies, although they are crowded up with later additions, dragged into the temple of war, and made a basis for a worship mingled with blood and infamy. But notwithstanding all this, and that their old titles are changed, their symbols are little interfered with, as though superstition caused the priests and people to cling to the ancient emblems of the gods of their forefathers. This Quirigua idol is the first direct departure from the old style.

Brinton gives "first, freshly, green, young," as his translation of *yax*, the first syllable of the idol's name typified by probably the youthful figure, we choosing "young, green," as its explanation. Brasseur's interpretation of it is, growth and vital force, adding the next syllable, *coc*, it may mean virgin earth; the youthful figure, also, is a representation of Kinich-Ahau, the sun god, and wears its symbol—therefore, all usual combinations are brought to bear upon the earth, for its benefit.

Brinton says that *Xpiyacoc* embodied the paternal powers of organic life, the name belonging to an archaic dialect, which leads to a question of derivations and the probability of getting into a maze between several tribal tongues. Landa almost agrees with Ligana; he says this idol was *Zamna*, the difference being the first employs the feminine the latter the masculine term. They were both not wholly in the wrong, as we have endeavoured to show; the dual principles necessary to the propagation of life were united in one word and emblem, and was it not *Yax* or *Ahau* who embodied both in his own person, and either was in all his attributes equal to the other, and the former was peculiarly in association with vegetable life as the calibash.

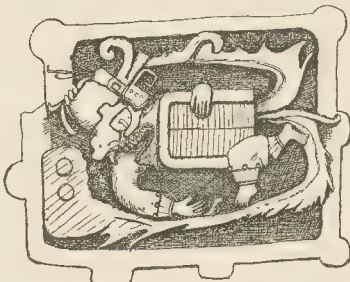
Brasseur, in his official report written in Yucatan, mentions *Ahcoc* or *Yaxcoc* "le germe renfermé" and also *Ahmüt* "noms qui avaient rapport à la fécondation terrestre, ou à la génération"; then in his vocabulary he renders *Yax-coc-Ahmüt* "master and mistress of the moist earth," which agrees with our view of the recognition of the dual principles—there seems even to be a play upon words in the combination.

This massive example of Indian carved work is a monument of skill and patience, and the drawings of the details of the ornamentation, owing to its weather-worn condition, can but be slowly produced, though in course of publication. All that can be done until they are ready is to give an ancient terra-cotta model of the idol, showing the earth and water-laden clouds or the serpent in close embrace, and name the Tortoise,—*Yax-coc-Ahmüt*.

The tillers of the earth receive a meed of praise, as a huge profile is several times introduced on the tortoise. Right and left of the seated sun god, placed amid the folds of the serpent, are two plaques, framed in a representation of masonry, or the outlet of an aqueduct, that have upon them priests looking like goblins, with heads disproportionately large in comparison with their bodies. They each hold an oval medallion marked out with perpendicular lines, indicating arable land under cultivation; one has the sign of three dots—"fertile," and they are alike in having running water in quantity about them; the guardian angels wear hideous water god masks. A Jesuit writer tells of the processions of the idols in his time, and how they were attended by extremely "ugly angels"—children,



it may be supposed, arrayed in quaint costume and masked, raised on high, as the imps are on the stelæ of Copan, round the idol. Other plaques seem to tell a similar story; one of these has a standing effigy with a club, and resembles that of the curious figure on the ornament of the chief priest (Plate II.). There it is hung round the neck—a place assigned to gods—therefore it must be a token held in the highest esteem; it is of a man. Can either or both of these be the arch-priest of the Chans? The plaque in the cut has two rings like the first glyph of the inundation record.



A Plaque from Quirigua.

The great obelisk of Quirigua rises above all the rest in its double height, and, being less profusely decorated, promises to be different. The old symbols, the mannikin sceptre, a border of feathers, and a close-fitting head-dress are upon the two male figures standing back to back, embedded or sunk into the stone in low relief, occupying two sides; the two remaining are carved with hieroglyphics. The eye follows them from bottom to top in search of the initial glyph, and a manifestation of an unheard-of deity, whose "image and superscription" will be strange. Two large glyphs begin an inscription on each side of the column, and it is rather disappointing to discover one to be the sheepish-looking Chan priest, the other the conventional serpent's head.

The profiles common to this district and Copan are as here represented, the priest, the sun god, the water god and his other ordinary visage of the serpent; excepting the first, they are all masked. Minor additions to the carved symbols, having perhaps a local interest, are seen here and there; the general sentiment, however, accords with that prevalent at Santa Lucia, Palenqué, and Copan—thankfulness for success in agricultural pursuits and for abundant harvests. The serpent has at Quirigua occupied as high a position as at Copan.

In both places, as if narrating the deeds of the gods in ancient times, there are a series of mythical stories poetically wrought out and recorded on stone—some are of burden-carrying figures, others wrestle with uncanny-looking creatures, and all are laboriously occupied, those of Copan appear to relate to fisheries; these would excite the imagination of the untutored child-like minds of the Indian races.

The storm, the sunshine, the thunder, the rain, are to the imaginative nature of the child explained as being the acts of a personal being, and savage tribes are but children of a larger growth, and what at first is to them a plain way of stating facts remains in later stages of mental growth a poetical representation of them. You say to a child as it trembles at the sound of thunder, "That is the voice of God," and the child believes it to be so in a plain and literal sense, but when it grows up it uses the same language, to which, however, it attaches a poetical or figurative meaning. Neither children nor uncivilized races can understand any phenomena unassociated with personal action. If anything happens, someone must have caused it; if the sun rides through the sky, Phæton is driving his burning chariot; if the lightning flash overhead, Jupiter is hurling his thunderbolts.



Initial profiles of the idols.

Thus the earliest myths are those relating to physical events; after them come myths relating to ethics.

They abound amongst all races, and are exemplified by such legends as Perseus and Andromeda, Jack the Giant Killer, and many others familiar to us as nursery tales.\*



Mythical Panel. Copan.

The mythical story carvings are part of the decorations of a stela, and the body of a lizard-like monster. The astrologers or priests on the last-named, which is at Quirigua, have caste marks on the face identical with the marked profiles of the priests hieroglyphically given on the Foliated Cross of Palenqué, the deduction being they were the same sect.

Following in the track of Stephens,† employing some of Catherwood's drawings, and taking the north-eastward course of the Maya tribes in their wanderings, the pilgrimage is continued, as, bearing with us the "sacred stone," an approach is made to the ruined cities of Yucatan, in quest of further relics of the past power of the Five deities. This is to leave prehistoric ground, as the manners and customs of the people of the peninsula and the idols they worshipped, many of inferior grade having existed, are matters of history. But the little gods of these pagans come not into the scope of the inquiry; they are, therefore, relegated to a subordinate position as the servants and messengers of the god of the air and light their ruler, the benign, the virgin-born *Quetzalcoatl*.‡ His serpent form combined with the human sun figure has been frequently spoken of as a horrid man-devouring monster, and it has been a pleasant task to disprove the calumny by showing him and his to have been of an eminently tranquil spirit, for as yet in all his appearances, and in the costumes of his priestly attendants, the inundation slab excepted, quetzal feathers, the token of peace, have proclaimed that his rule was one of tranquillity. Had it been otherwise, eagle feathers, the sign of war and disturbance, would have replaced them.

At Zayi, the ruined temple is an imposing stone structure of three tiers; a grand staircase in the centre thirty-two feet wide rises to the platform of the highest terrace, the lower building having a frontage two hundred and sixty-five feet by sixty-five feet in depth. It has sixteen doorways; at the exterior corner of the building is an ornamental grotesque head with a long hanging proboscis, in the cornice a thick-bodied monster with gaping jaws and long teeth with five cross-hatched spots on the skin. Sabachtsché has a temple, like all the ruined buildings, falling down under the disintegrating power of a tropical climate and a vigorous wild vegetation; the details of ornament are few, consisting of lattice work stone, forming a diamond pattern, none other than the enlarged crossings of the monster at Zayi—that peaceful monster, our friend the serpent. Another building has an immense mask with an exaggerated upturned nose, and a huge grecque balances it on the façade. The gateway of Labnah has similar gigantic grecques, which represent water-bearing clouds. A magnificent building stands on a terrace four hundred feet long and one hundred and fifty feet in depth.

The whole façade is richly sculptured, the left corner of the principal building being the most curious. On this, Stephens saw "the huge open jaws of an alligator or some other hideous animal enclosing a human head." Again the mystifications of the priests have veiled

\* W. Benham: "Dictionary of Religion," 1887.

† J. L. Stephens: "Incidents of Travels in Yucatan," 1843. ‡ G. D. Bruten: "The Maya Chronicles."

the truth, for we are face to face with *Kinich-Ahau* seated in the serpent's jaws; behind is the huge nose of the water god; "Yax," otherwise vitality, is upright between two vegetating germs—concentric circles, and small grecques are used as a border. The lightning pyramid shape is below.

Sachey has a temple in ruins; the proboscis ornament is well preserved, and there is one at Chunhuhu with large grecques.

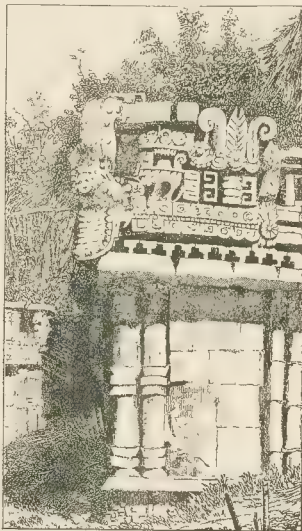
Labphak has a bas-relief on stone of a Chan priest who holds the long-nosed mannikin sceptre in his hand; his head-gear and the glyph bear the sign of the wind cross. Chichen Itza also has decorated ruined buildings. That called Akatzeel has a sculptured panel covered with glyphs, forming the upper part of a door, which contains the profiles of the sun god, the water god, the life sign, the sun-flower, and aguadas or reservoirs, *imix*, plenty, and heaven.

The Monjas or nuns' house has a façade with a cornice of lightning pattern; over the door is a sitting figure, the head profusely adorned with feathers—the front and corners of this building have for the

chief decoration *long-nosed*, very ornate water god masks with earrings of the Santa Lucia Maltese cross or sun form. The so-called *Eglesia* has the same characteristics, and a building named *Casa Colorada*, or Red House, contains a long row of much-defaced hieroglyphics with the initial glyph profile of the sun god intact. The tennis court has pumas or tigers on the outer wall. The *teocallis* or *castillo* has a staircase forty-four feet wide, the first step being flanked by two colossal serpents' heads, ten feet in length, with mouths wide open and protruding tongues. A sculptured jamb of a door has on it a figure four feet eight inches in height, with a plumed serpent as the background; two vitality or life signs are the sole hieroglyphics.

Stephens did not give this figure a name—Chavero has it in his work as *Kukulcan*. Several other ruined places show the extensive influence of the Chans, but with Uxmal will conclude the statements made in proof of it.

The principal ruin of this place is the *Casa del Gobernador* standing on three



The Fire, at Labnah.



Zaji.



Cimchei Itza

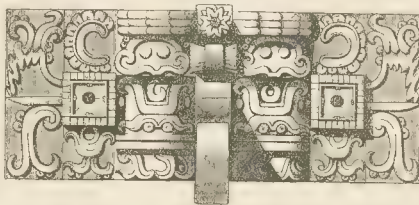


Uxmal.



Chichen Itza.

Noses of the Serpent God.



Symbols, Casa del Gobernador, Uxmal.



terraces with a frontage of three hundred and twenty-two feet, covered with ornament. The main entrance has a figure with a mass of plumes thrice its height, others similar are over other doors—priests, no doubt, as at Copan. Immediately above these figures is a mass of symbols in mask form, the front as given in the illustration, with a proboscis one foot seven inches long if seen by a side view. The upper part has a sun-flower between feathers, the eyebrow is the base of "yax" with two dots enclosed taken from *Ahau*, whose third dot as a seed or germ placed in a *yon*i forms the eye, giving this sense "the place of germination," that is, the seat of an embryo; under this are concentric sun circles. The square earrings are the sun cross of Santa Lucia; the worth of the nose symbol we know. Large cloud grecques and lattice work proclaim the god of the air. The Kabab temple walls are a pile of smaller masks of the same character. The detail of the



The Sun and Serpent, Uxmal.

eastern court façade of the Monjas at Uxmal has the same symbolism slightly varied and is of much interest, because having a greater likeness to the Peruvian Inca sculptures and emblems than anything else in Mexico. In this instance the sun with the tongue out is encircled by feathers; six circles denote abundance, straight bars have terminals with a serpent's head, and lattice cross-hatching proclaims this to be a building consecrated to the service of the god of the air. The Casa de los Palomos, like several old Dutch houses in a line, has a range of step-like roof fronts, the zigzag of lightning; the House of the Birds is roofed with stone carved to represent the feathers of the quetzal. This closes a summary of examples of the combined emblems sculptured and displayed in the temples of Yucatan, conclusive of the existence of the worship of the Five in unity.

The puma or tiger at Palenqué is utilized as a double-headed seat; at Quirigua as an initial glyph; at Uxmal as a seat—in each case it is marked with an emblem of the sun. Uxmal, on the incoming of the Spaniards worshipped Zamna and Itzamna, that is *Ahau*, the *yon*i-lingam, personified probably in the "sacred stone." The ceremonies, dances, processions, and statues, disgusted the pious monks, so an interdict went out against them; and of the latter the broken remains confirm the statements of history. Stephens makes a passing allusion to them—"Hæc monumenta ex undecim phallis constant omnibus plus minus ve fractis, undique dispersis, atque solo semio-brutis, duorum circiter vel trium pedum mensuram habentibus, &c."

H. H. Bancroft's fourth volume, "Native Races," in the second and third chapters, deals with the less artistic stone monuments and other archaeological antiquities of Central America, and reference is now made to this credible authority.

A terra-cotta from the graves of Costa Rica has a distinct connection with nature worship; a granite vase from the Mosquito coast has grecques similar to Uxmal; among the more ancient remains of Nicaragua is the cliff painting at Lake Nijapa of the plumed or feathered serpent, and of smaller examples is a figure with eyes and rays in the upper part, on either side the extended jaws of a serpent—the supporting legs, four in number, classify the figure as *Kinich-Ahau*. Anthropomorphism is rampant, as at Santa Lucia, in the island of Zapatero; the monoliths are rivals of Copan in their dimensions, though artistically inferior. Fig. 1 has two marks, vertically placed, of the sign *ik*, the symbol of *Kukulcan*. Fig. 2 is

a quadruped, bearing on its side a large disc, and the creature may be the sun god, although it has been compared to a tiger. Fig. 3, an idol in a leaning position, has a head placed in the open jaws of a serpent, whose symbols are on the human head, and the teeth, with the markings on the side of the reptile's head, are like sculpture at Copan. Fig. 9, of a sitting figure, has the large teeth of the water god, with a second mask above; with this we are familiar in districts where a higher degree of artistic excellence had been attained to.

The Pensacola idols exhibit like features, but are ruder in conception; Subtiara, Fig. 1, has the head adorned with feathers. Fig. 2 is like the "Diosa de la Generacion" of Chavero, which is a rough baked clay figure bearing the old symbol "yax"; the human head below the centre of the composition is as suggestive as the peeping head of the better modelled stone statue exhibited by Baneroft. Fig. 3 was thought to resemble the Copan stelæ.

As to the Chontal statues, Fig. 1 has on the breast a large T, associated in our minds with irrigation, and its appearance here raises the surmise as to the place of origin of this symbol, which is almost in universal usage, and in which direction the practices common to the people at large took their way from the earliest antiquity. Is the foliated cross of Palemké an early or a late memorial of *Kukulcan*? Fig. 3, of a monolith found near Juigalpa, termed by Mr. Pim a headstone of a grave, with the curled forms at the corners of the mouth and the four equal limbs, is undoubtedly *Kinich-Ahau*, the



Sun statue at Juigalpa.

sun. Taking the head by itself it is a replica of a Copan pattern for a sun god's mask, and at this point of the inquiry no one will dispute that to him belong the four limbs, or that the three tufts of feathers on the head are not the *ix* sign, and consequently life, not death, is here portrayed. An altar from Zapatero has incised figures of a serpent or long-nosed head, a sun concentric circle, an S and other forms allied to the early boulder carvings in Forsyth county.

The Campeche district has yielded the most meagre information concerning antiquities. Mr. Norman, however, obtained some ancient terra-cotta idols; the largest is that of a standing figure bearing two heads of the long-nosed mask at the elbows.

The pyramid of Xochicalco, adorned with designs in sculptured stone, has for its conspicuous decoration, running the whole length of the wall, the elongated body of the plumed serpent, perhaps the largest representation of this god in the country, possessing, however, no feature of peculiar interest. A pyramidal stone of Mecamecan has the five dots of the gods, the *o* sign of life, and the three dots of "abundance." Mitla is gloomy, mysterious, adorned with signs of *Kukulcan* in his worst moods. A Tikal panel, part adorning the title-page, has all the emblems; the sun mask is there, pinched into an owl shape, a type seen in the Aztec manuscripts; his claws are very apparent and the serpent's feathers are conspicuous.



Diosa de la Generacion. Chavero



Clouds, bolts, lightning Mitla.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE influence of the Maya priests, astrologers, medicine men and artists is visible throughout the territory formerly under the control of the Aztecs; but the lords of the country seem to have been in the ascendant and sacerdotalism less rampant than in the provinces on the gulf, as the ruined temples yield few sculptured stones of value other than those belonging to the city of the king's residence.

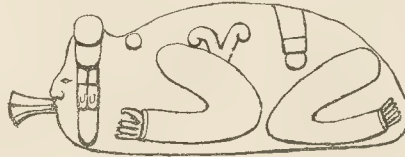
The God of War, Huitzilopochtli; the Goddess of Death, Teoyaomiqui; and the God of Hell, Mictlantecutli;—a trinity, whatever their varied powers in the time of Montezuma—were composite, that is, had not sprung from an original idea and had been grafted on the old basis of the five. The statue of the God of Hell upturned shows, a four-legged fabulous creature of the outlines of the lizard of Quirigua with a gaping water god mouth and serpent teeth; the spread-out body has displayed upon it the sun-flower of the foliated cross. The colossal and magnificent head of the goddess Centeolt, carved out of a block of serpentine, has the overlapping head covering of a sun shape, the bands on the brow have a germ form which has been incorrectly termed a scallop-shell; the cross on the cheeks is that used in the manuscripts for gold—in this and other cases apparently having reference to the golden light of the sun. The priests did not disdain the precious metal and, oddly enough, with the spiritual teaching received by the inspiration direct from the Architect of the Universe, had the instruction to command it to be devoted to the service of the temples, forbidding its employment elsewhere. From which the inference is drawn that they were endowed with a large amount of human nature and in no degree differed from the sacerdotalists and other men of all ages.

A cursory examination of the names of the later set-up Aztec idols concludes in the name of the sun being found not specially prominent; the old symbols are, however, everywhere on carved stones and in the hieratic writings.

The British Museum has a dark pebble example of the idol Kinich-Ahan, bearing the Aztec sun sign and another hieroglyphic belonging to them; also his sign. The latter, if written, expresses "where one sees." In naming villages it is attached to the sign for "a place" with a third hieroglyphic, say "salt," making together "a place where there is salt." On the pebble, it being with emblematic and sacred things, it is rendered "here one sees the



Five Gods"—that is, figuratively, there. As ever, "yax" represents, by the V sign, the union of the sexes and the vegetating principle of life; the quadruped with the human face, the sun; the serpent has in a measure withdrawn—the axe-like looking tongue is all that is seen of him. The lower position he takes is in accord with the Aztec record in stone, though in the Codices he continued to occupy a good place. The tongue given is like the outline of the upper part of the Moquis Indians' serpent dance head-boards.



Aztec Kinich-Ahau. British Museum.

Manuscripts take the place of sculpture in the pursuit of an inquiry into the structure of the Aztec hieroglyphics, and they are replete with instances of the continued use of modifications of the principal Maya symbols and conventional forms; the result of a close study of the latter is that they are now easily selected. The five-rayed star was preserved as an old token. On the great so-called Calendar stone of Mexico city, which seems to be a memorial erected by the sun caste to their deity and those ordinarily in unison, the "acalt" or cane, otherwise *Ahau*, is the uppermost glyph—it became one of the year signs; *yax* is there inverted. Numerous sun rays and the three sun pointers form a circle next to an inner one of the domino-shaped five spot sign for the heavens, observed at Palenqué and Copan, which sign, we repeat, may have application to "the heavenly five" of Tihoo. The plumed one is right and left of the large central Sun mask, given now in full face, with his tongue well displayed; other serpent signs are at the base, of which two grinning masks, placed face to face, are in position like a pair on the larger obelisk of Quirigua, with the difference that one has an upturned nose; they are flanked on both sides by the jaws of the serpent.

As elsewhere, the same undeviating order of precedence is maintained by the priests and the astrologers, the ancients holding their place at the head of the Aztec pantheon. They were by no means forgotten without the walls of the temple, as several native army divisions had their symbols emblazoned on banners and shields; Montezuma, his chiefs, and the priests wore them stamped and embroidered on their robes—some of the stamps having a Peruvian type. They are found in the picture writings of the time of the conquest, on the household articles, jars, pipes, spindle-whorls and musical instruments; the privileged classes and the mass of the people were at one in doing these gods reverence.

In our national collection there is a handsome half-length idol of rubbed stone, a third of a life-size representing a youthful figure of Centeolt or Ceres holding a bunch of maize in the right hand; below is a pendant and flames, a manifestation of the sun as at Santa Lucia, and in accord with emblems on the colossal head. "Abundance" in the "yax" form hangs to the collar; the head-band has a tie flanked by two signs for "xihuitl," jadeite, which with blue stones was sacred to the service of the temple.

To the left of it is an undescribed flat carved stone, another example of undeviating custom, it being in all respects the same in its intention as the plaque of Yax-coc-Ahmut of Quirigua, shown already. The priestly figure holds the outlet of an aqueduct pouring out a rushing stream.

When classifying the sun masks of the Palenqué crosses, allusion was made to Holden's "hades" on the idol of the Goddess of Death or Hell, and an objection was raised because it bore the sun-flower emblem. Archæologists who have partially mastered the Aztec mythology

give to this idol a wider sphere, and our judging it by its companionship did not create an error. The reason for the sun being hidden under the idol is given in the Mexican catalogue,



The Aztec Coatlicue, the Goddess of the Moist Earth.

namely, that "she represented the earth and was mistress of the regions of the dead; in the night the sun sinking into the earth was converted into the lord of the dead, being beneath her." This hideous idol, with large tusks and hung round with chequered serpents, is a conception of the mistress of the moist earth. The description states further, "the upper part is the head of a serpent whose body is entwined with that of a woman, which gives us her other name "goddess of the earth." She is also said to be "progenitrix of the first pair from whom humanity descended."

Bancroft ("The Native Races," Vol. IV., page 512) produces both the back and front view of this idol, the illustration of the rear having been rarely introduced by authors into their books. Its importance consists in being the representation of a god, the sexes, however, being welded together back to back in the ungainly monolith, and, oddly enough, accounts have been written describing these two as having individuality. Gama names them separately; to the front and more commanding figure he gives the appellation of Teoyaomiqui, or the Goddess of Death, while the reverse is called Huitzilopochtli, or the God of War. The luminous reasoning of Señor Chavero broadens our view of the attributes of the goddess.

Popularly she is known as Coatlicue, the goddess of the skirt of serpents—her skirt, adorned with tassels and feathers, is a web of snakes; the many hands which the figure has are symbolic of the productive power of Mother Earth. And although this statue in its aggregation represents the earth, it is the earth in the night-time or after sunset. It is, therefore, "the mistress of the regions of the dead"; it is the loving bosom of a mother, on which her children repose in eternal slumber, hence the adornments of skulls which the statue has in its belt. The Mexican historian also says the mother of Quetzalcoatl is recognised in this memorial, and, metaphorically, love for the snake caste may be expressed, but the manner of it is crude and almost savage.

Nevertheless, all the old elements are here in combination. The idol is little else than what is seen in the serpent and tortoise, and in the charming Yax-coc-Ahmüt of Quirigua, made, however, a repulsive-looking thing by the comparatively brutal Aztecs. They represented her encircled with pouches "for holding copal gum, signifying sacrifice and adoration." This tells the meaning of those hung to the girdles of the Copan casts at South Kensington, and it is stated that they were never found in the statues of the various manifestations of the sun. The incense burners at Copan, three in number, are of the forms of symbols pertaining to the serpent, and our Plate III., the Sun and Man memorial, has few pouches. The Female stela and those to the Chan Serpent caste have them, confirmatory of the views of Chavero, Blake, and other antiquarians resident in Mexico.

Early in this inquiry it was noticed how far-reaching nature worship was on the American continent, and it is time a tribute was paid to Dr. Brinton, who, though he did not

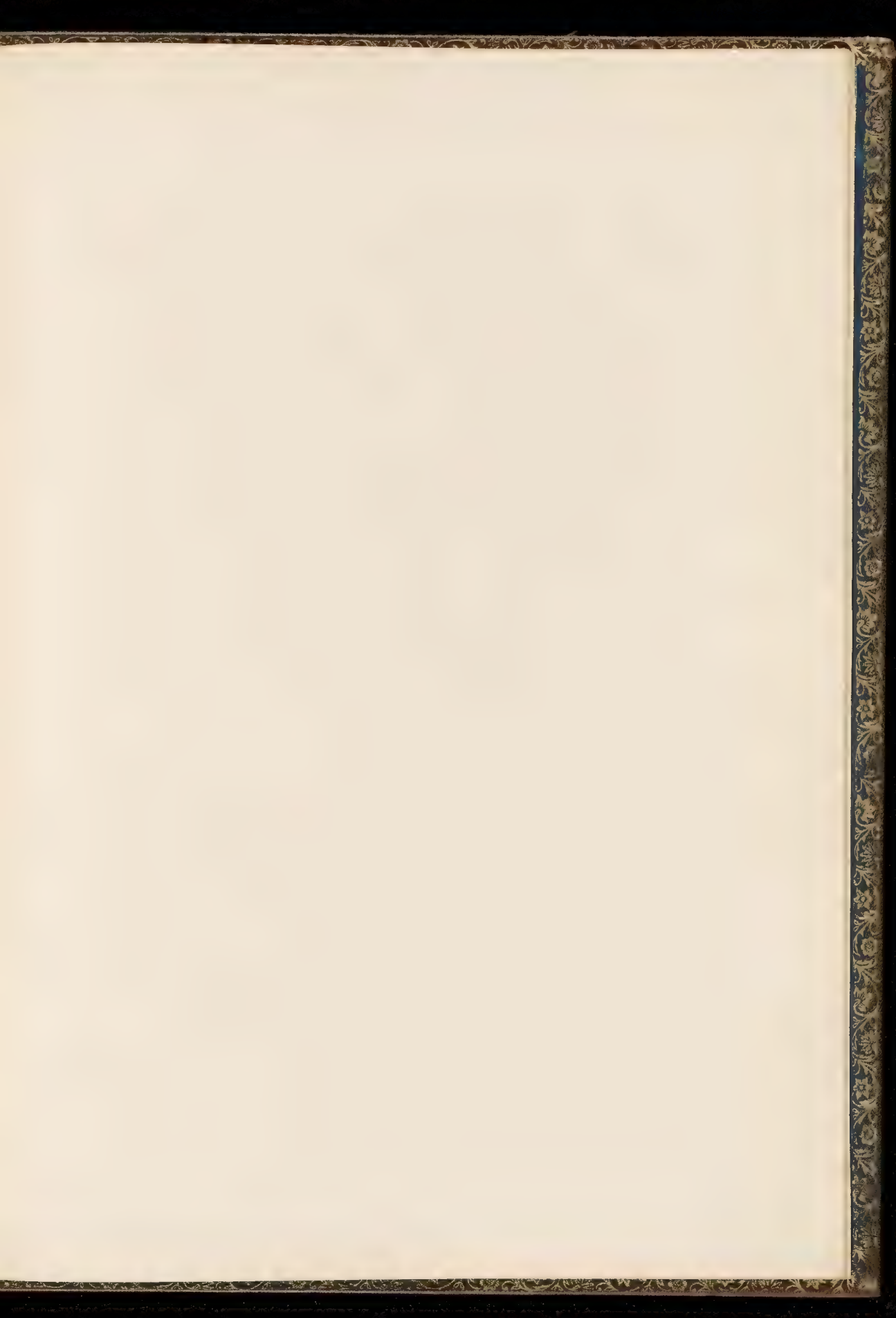


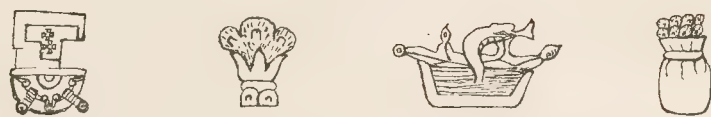


Plate VI.

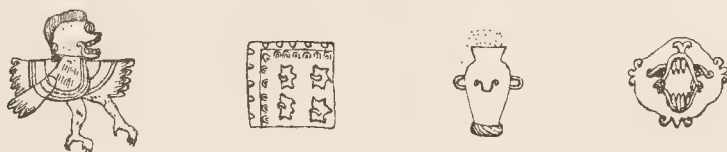
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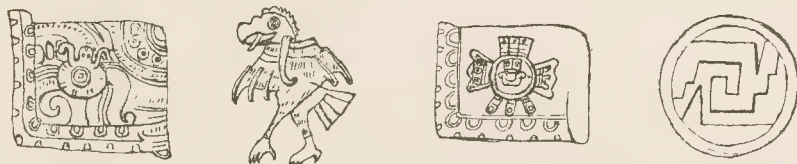
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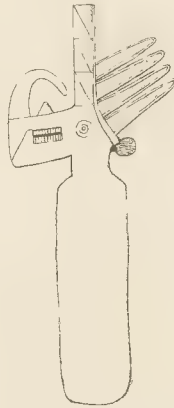
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prove this, thought those who did not realize it were wanting in understanding. Every step taken when once the right track was discovered testifies to its universality and apparently to its native origin.

The Christy collection, photograph 152—bronzes, has an axe or club form of *Kukulcan* with a long nose, zigzag decorations and his emblematic four in the feathers of the head—a disc exhibited with it bears the full face of the sun and serpents; these objects came from one of the provinces of the Argentine Confederation. This universality of sentiment is almost tiresome, but it was so, Gomara affirms that the newly-made Aztec king swore that during his reign he would make the sun to shine, the clouds to give rain, the rivers to flow and the earth to bring forth fruits in abundance.

The Aztec hieroglyphics of Plate VI. are inserted with the intent of establishing the fact of there being an affinity between them and those of the Mayas. Following the order in which they are set from left to right we see:—Row 1. A serpent or water god above a space of cultivated and well-watered ground bearing little horse-shoes, the mark for "productive," two inverted eyes, says "Here can be found irrigated and fruitful land." A dish similarly marked contains fermenting matter, the "yax" mark is "to produce," the upper figure of teeth is the sign for "a place"—thus we have "a place which produces plenty of pulque," the fermented drink of the country. An olin sign, signifying a thunderbolt. A pendant in three points with corn heads reads "much maize." Row 2. A house with the sun below and his cross upon it, "the temple of the sun." A cotton-pod upon two teeth and the horse-shoe mark of productiveness, "a place growing much cotton." A serpent in a "sacred stone" form, "a place where running water abounds"; the receptacle introduced into this hieroglyphic was one of the first things we had to consider when entering upon our subject. A sack and germinating seed, "corn seed." Row 3. The Ara or macaw wearing a sun mask. A banner with sun markings and four five-pointed stars; in this instance like those observed in Peru. A jar with dots and "yax," "here drink is brewed." A grotesque serpent's head, "a cave." Row 4. The rain god, one of the forms of *Kukulcan* or *Quetzalcoatl*. Acalt, the bamboo, the cane, vitality, and in *Palemkê*, *Aharu*. Pyramid forms above three sun emblems, "several sun temples are in this vicinity." Another effigy of the rain god. Row 5. A mantle or banner with the *Kinich-Abau* sun figure. The condor, sometimes in Peru, and with the Mayas, representative of the sun. Another, "Manta," with the Santa Lucia sun cross, the rays in threes of sun marks; the centre seems to read "a sunny place." A figure of a shield with zigzag lightning and rain-cloud grecque forms.\*



*Kukulcan* in bronze, from the Argentine Provinces. British Museum.

These are a few of the numerous glyphs having ideographically, and in their sense, a close relation to forms on the slabs, obelisks, and temples of the Maya country. Brasseur saw infinite variety in the Maya and Quiché languages; consequently, it is quite possible that our translations of the signs and emblems are not wide enough in their application, and proof is constantly found of this. Brinton, who usually is at variance with the abbé, states that in the Quiché dialect there are six hundred combinations of the word for "to love," almost as startling as his statement that everything pleasant in the Maya tongue began with "ci,"—if so, "cimi," "death," ordinarily the king of terrors, is in wrong

\* Dr. Penafiel: "Nombres Geográficos de Mexico." Mexico, 1885.

companionship. There is every reason to suppose the Aztec hieratic writing to be richer in expression than our ideas of it, and that in common with that of the Mayas, it has been employed in a too limited sense.

The symbolism is intermingled with strange effigies, and it is a surprise to discover in Chavero's work (Vol. I., p. 756), in the centre of a "monumento cronologico," the front view of a head, evidently intended as an image of the sun, which is the counterpart of one on the ancient stone, already mentioned, discovered after being for ages under the guano beds of Peru. But there is a limit to inquiry, otherwise the Easter Island hieroglyphics might be brought within its scope, and an attempt be made to link Polynesia with America, which would do violence to the feelings of archaeologists who, for the most part, half accept the Atlanta myth. In the Codex Borgiano is a group which the excellent Mexican archaeologist brings forward as the creation of Coat or the serpent (Vol. I., p. 341), whereby we are led to suppose he was made later than Ahau and the sun, as their emblems being present testify to their pre-existence. Here the "sacred stones" of the Mayas may be brought in to confirm the legend, inasmuch as the many known have more often the two together than in combination with the serpent. This, moreover, unexpectedly falls into the order adopted at the outset of this inquiry as to the beginning and development of the symbolism.

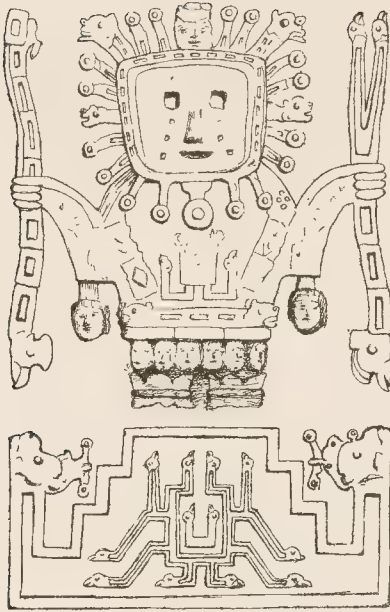
From time to time in the ancient temples of Mexico the archaeologist sees on the sculptures, more particularly with the Guatemalians, forms common in Peru. The similarity is strong enough to create an impression of the possibility of there having been a migration from the south.

At Lake Titicaca, according to Mr. Clements R. Markham, about fifteen hundred miles south of the isthmus, is Tiahuanaca. The ruins of the temple are renowned, and the great gateway with the idol figure stands alone in that part of the world in its singularity and dimensions. It is large, overweighted with its out-of-proportioned head, looking like a refined example of the idol Juggernaut of India. It is encircled with rays ending in concentric circles and serpents' heads. With the former we are familiar; the latter name may be rejected, as the creature has a pig-nose exactly as the serpent of Santa Lucia, said by the learned doctor to be a boar.

The idol is undoubtedly that of the Sun. Eighteen are the number of marks round the face, on each cheek are three dots, the hands grasp sceptres with clear cut grooves of the pattern of the sacred fire-stick of the Aztecs, the terminals are condors' heads. At the elbows are young male and female faces emblematic of vitality, and other heads at the waist recall the girdles of the Chan memorials at Copan, and above them is the prolific *ix* mark. The figure all but rests upon a pyramidal structure in relief, with a puma's or a serpent's head at the corners, the centre consisting of an angular cluster of condor-headed serpents. Here then we have the sun, the serpent, and vitality; unfortunately, the breast ornament is broken. Another resemblance to the Maya temples occurs in the name, it being not of the current but of an archaic idiom—that is, "Ti-ahua-na-ca," save for the difference in the second syllable, might be translated "this place is the temple building of Ahau," otherwise, the principal deity.

The temple buildings restored would show a continuous series of wind crosses in the masonry, the windows taking the form of an Aztec sun mark, and on the parapet of the roof is the exact outline of a shrine. Nor is this all, for a colossal head, of the pattern of an incense burner at Copan—namely, of a man's head covered with a skull cap, the chin resting





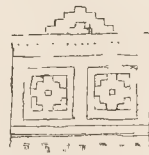
THE IDOL AT TIAHUANACA, PERU.



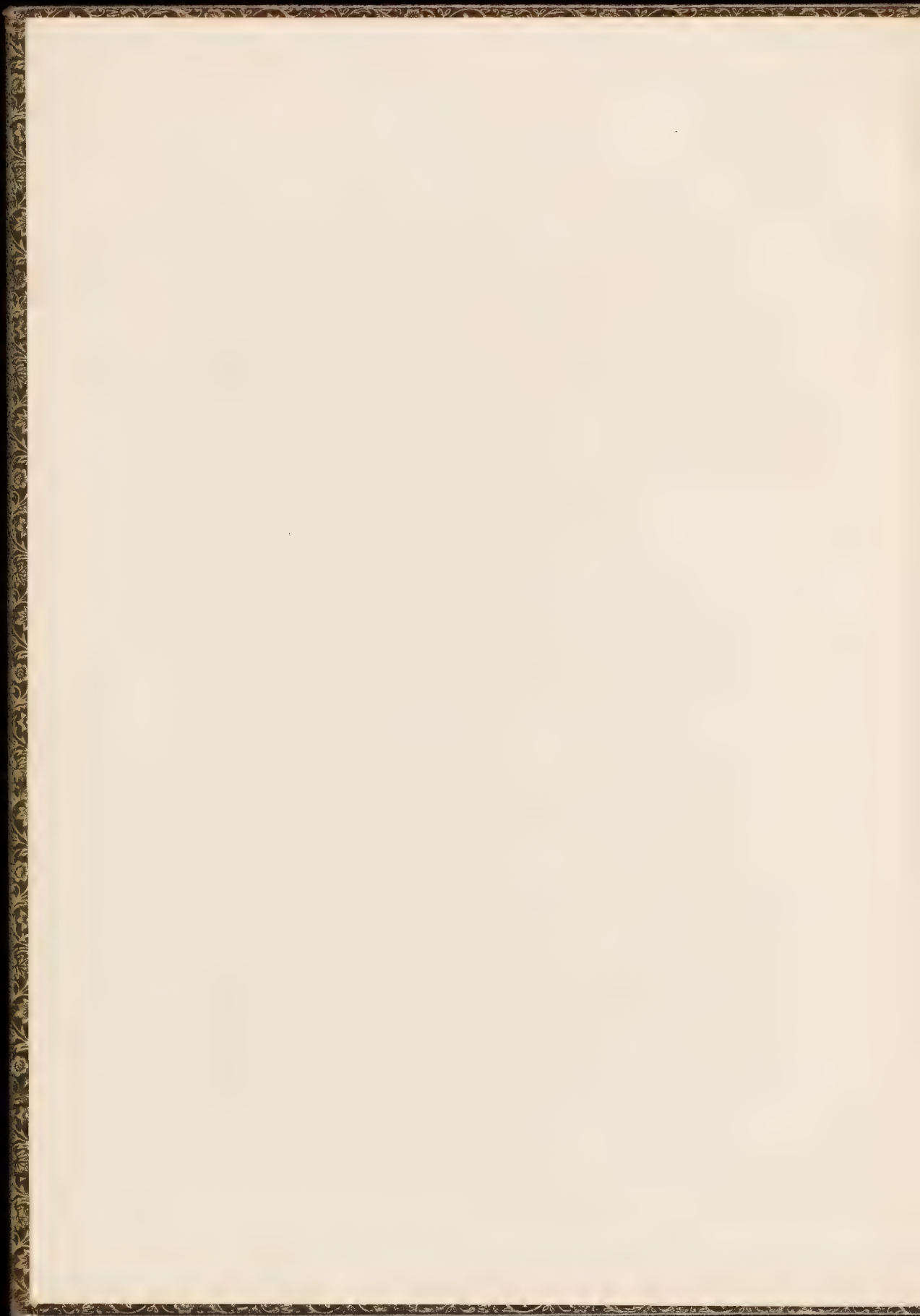
THE FIVE EMBLEMS AT  
CHAVIN, PERU.



AN INCA PRIEST, PERU.



RESTORED TEMPLE, PERU.



on the ground—was discovered at the outlet of an aqueduct; it has the *ix* mark on the cheeks, and the wind cross on the head-band. The Copan object has a **T** on the cheek, to attach it to the worship of the irrigation god. These coincidences, taken with others, are worthy of remark, and rather support the view of there having been communication between Central America and the inhabitants of Peru in ancient times. Finally, a monolith, composed of one pointer of the "sacred Maya stone" has on its surface the Five Emblems—the sun mask, the yoni, the serpent, the vegetating germ, the concentric circles—the monolith of course being the *Ahau*, the "membre viril." From the small objects found in tombs, further evidence could be adduced of the identity of the emblems.

The Inca priest in the cut has also "the five" about him, the serpent with the sun-bird or condor heads; on the brow the **U** or yoni-lingam, the germ under the ear, concentric circles on the face and elsewhere; the left foot rests upon the five-rayed star, and the right has an unusual mark similar to that on the head of the puma of Quirigua, which, in the case of the puma, is a double germ, and like the animal, was emblematic of the sun.

The artistic treatment, the hollowed outlines, are those observable on figures at Santa Lucia which have been called skeletons.

Several valuable publications have provided us with illustrations of the patterns of the mummy wrappers of the Incas, and of the forms stamped on textile fabrics, Professor Keane's work being of great interest. In the absence of hieratic writings, these are to us the records of the religion of the ancient inhabitants

of Peru. It is not an analogy alone that is discerned between them and the worship of the



The Cloud, Wind, Sun, and Fecundity Symbols of Peru. Professor Keane.\*

Mayas and Aztecs; there is an identity. With but a slight variation, in that the symbols are more archaic, there is no difference. Taken from the grave-clothes they look much like the stiff figures of an old sampler; they are, however, perfectly correct figures. The staff of office, accompanied by cloud forms, doubtless indicates rank in connection with the temple dedicated to the water god; the *ik* sign is here particularly ornate in its zigzag limbs. The term was very ancient, as has been stated in connection with an allusion to the progenitors of the Maya race. Its common use in Peru helps to confirm a belief in the Mayas or kindred tribes having received immigrants from the south, if they did not themselves derive their origin from thence. Of two sun forms in the illustration, one resembles the Santa Lucia, the other the Aztec model.

The prevailing disposition here was to cling to nature worship, and the testimony of all who have carefully examined Peruvian sepulchres is to that effect. Herr Wiener's work furnishes numerous proofs of this; the few subjoined examples of ornamentation are further evidence if it were wanting.

Here we see the crab, the winged and plumed serpent, and the sun figure—the latter surrounded with wind emblems, those of the cross and *ik*, the latter in two styles,—one a ring with legs like a small sea creature, the other blackened after the form of this emblem in the hieratic Maya writings. Another link with Central America, to which may be joined the crab that first came under our notice on the slabs at Santa Lucia.

\* A. H. Keane: "The Necropolis of Ancon in Peru." 1850.



Material accumulates with little effort in an endeavour to bring forward from Peru examples of the symbols Mexico inherited from her ancient people.

Of one divinity we stumble on traces so often he



The Crab, Plumed Serpent, Sun, and Cloud forms, from Peruvian textile fabrics. C. Wiener.\*

will live in our remembrance, and surviving specimens are not few, as the clay grotesque vessels for holding water have been preserved in large quantities. The Peruvian effigy of the water-bottle has the long teeth characteristic of this idol in the north.

In connection with this, the idea occurs that, as when water and a human jaw are in combination in the Aztec hieroglyphics, and according to Dr. Penafiel, the figure refers to potable water; this may explain the constant introduction of a lower jaw into memorials to, or into the hieroglyphics of, the water god Kukulcan or Quelzalcoatl.

Is it against the weight of evidence to decide that the Mexican races were uninfluenced by the Peruvians? The latter would appear to have been the longer established, and many of their ancient words connected with sacred things have an affinity to the Quiché and

Maya languages, while modern names do not at all resemble them.

Was there a migration from Peru?



A Peruvian clay bottle; the Water God.

Two Inca signs have been variously dealt with by archæologists. Doubtless the priests made use of them ideographically, and it might be conjectured they were emblematic, as they are incorporated into the structure of the sacred buildings and were, in that application, of more pleasing design than the T form used by the Mayas at Palenqué. The upper part of these Inca signs is significant of the intention of preserving in memory the introduction of water storage and irrigation. One has the cross of the four winds, the rain bringers, the other the aqueduct or aguada sign, while both, in the lower part, are of the outline of conduits or water channels of fixed masonry.



The Mexican emblem perplexed the erudite Abbé Brasseur, who remarks upon it in the hieratic *cimi*, by some termed the "death sign." He judged that if it was employed to tell of the decease of a person, then the axe filling the eye-space was placed there to convey the idea of a death caused by violence. But on looking at the mask the long teeth of the water god are observable; consequently, taking this feature in connection with the T, it is most fitting to rank the sign on a line with those employed as dealing with water and its use for the purposes of agriculture. Our difference with Dr. Brinton, concerning the word of unpleasant aspect beginning with *ci*, ceases to exist if he admits that this application can be made, and *cimi* admitted into the category of signs having reference to the treasured water of the dry uplands of the Maya country.


The uniformity that existed between the Inca emblems and those of Central America is abundantly apparent, but the subject is wide, and at the moment cannot be further remarked upon.

The decipherment of the Maya symbols among the hieroglyphics of the temples

\* C. Wiener: "Perou et Bolivie." Paris, 1880.

naturally leads to an elucidation of the problem of their worth as hieratic signs. Though taking an entirely superficial view, and not claiming acquaintance with the *Codices* as does Dr. Cyrus Thomas, following his clever dissertation entitled "A Study of the Manuscript Troano,"\* a running commentary on the idol figures and emblems recognised in the few pages of his *fac-simile* will follow as suggestions from the standpoint of one familiar with them on carved stone.

In the first place, we cannot coincide in the prefatory remark of Dr. Brinton, that the graphic system of the Mayas of Yucatan and the Aztecs was very different. They are not plainly independent developments in respect of the signs employed in alluding to the idols, and the powers attributed to them; the contention being that in the matter of creeds the Mayas had exercised considerable influence upon the religious thought of the Aztecs. But outside the circle enclosing sacred things there is some, though not a great dissimilarity.

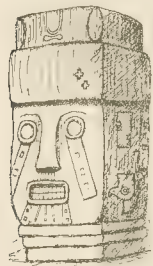
*Fac-simile* Plate 20 of the *Codex Troano* has the  sign and on the left the sun sign bracketed together, which may be rendered "he who is (this is) the Sun, the life-giver." A priestly figure occupies a seat marked with signs for the sun and heaven, offering a petition to or lauding the deity, the serpent and other blended symbols; *yax* at the base indented, has above it the "kan kan" sign accepted as being equivalent to crops, corn, maize. That incense was burnt before the serpent has been stated already, the squatting priest may be at the censor. The erect figure dibbling and sowing seed wears a head-dress with the sign *ah*, man, placed horizontally, therefore he is not an idol, and being a collar-man, is of superior rank. The fabulous quadruped, supplicating the skies, will probably some day be known as the earth, represented here as being thin, dry, parched—that is, there is no "fatness" in the land.

This assemblage rests on a platform of five signs—the sun, the sign *chuen*, or an opening or growing calibash, the water god has a cloud nose, the three *chicchan* black marks on the head, then follow the slanting rain cross, and the firmament.

The lower section contains an "olla," which has reference to the storage of grain, marked with the sign used above; here it may be, "this is grain obtained from the moist earth by hoeing," that is by agricultural labour. The animal being the earth, "spotted," signifying moist; the big blotches seem to take the place of the cross-hatching usual on the stone slabs; the serpent is so blotched in the manuscripts. The seated figures of the base both rest on a hieratic sign, not a heap of stones. It is identical with the more distinct one in Plate 22, and there is no hesitation in stating it is the sign for *Ahau*, "lord or chief," and being here it reads "our lord the water god" to the right; "our lord the sun" to the left.

The left hand figure is the sun, known by the macaw on the head. Indifferent, inactive, with a closed eye, the earth beseeches him to put forth his strength and shine; in attendance are the symbols of other powers with whom the rain god works for the benefit of mankind.

The priests of the sun plead with *Kukulcan* on the Usumacinta slab; here, emblematic figures of two birds are in attendance, one a parrot, the other a vulture-form,—Brasseur says its head marking was Kinch-Ahau's emblem; thus the combined five join the earth in its prayer. The upper division of this sheet is in allusion to the want of water the lower, to the absence of sunshine and the continuation of dull weather. Thus it is



Colossal head at Collo-Collo, Peru, and the incense burner of Copan.



\* "United States Geographical and Geological Survey," Washington, 1882.

still with pagan nations—the Chinese, as we say “chin-chin” the sun god when they want his services, and are inattentive when he is bountiful; and in the language of Scripture they “inquire early after God” when in extremity.

The water god, having exercised his attributes beyond beneficial bounds, sits neglected in the right hand corner.

The blue receptacle with the signs *kan kan* and sprouting vegetation seems to allude to abundant crops in standing water.

Plate 21, page 71. The inscription appears to be read from the right, contrary to the mode of the tablets. Begin with the *on*, and Ahau, and reading right and left for the eight signs, we have “he who is the origin of things”; then follows the water god known by his nose, the sun, land supplied with water, and a mask, probably a priest. The illustration may have reference to artificially flooded land. The priest on stilts, the blue or wet feet, the bird with Kukulcan symbols in the head infer it. If the bird is a symbol of the serpent god, it may tell of a loss of a third of the produce of the cultivated land by bad weather. The seated figure wearing an animal's head mask is probably the sun and manual labour combined. Notice the *ah*, “man,” as on the Stela (Plate III.) at Copan. The “olla” is marked with dots, probably the five of the sign for the firmament, and loops with a mark on the margin, usually conveying the idea of running water. The serpent head covering identifies the Chan priest. The *kan* signs, two white, one black, may mean not a full yield; while a change to two or one may indicate the degree of percentage below an ordinary crop—because three, meaning a full return, and the employment of six or nine the comparative and superlative, the lesser number might be used to express a bad harvest and a diminished supply of grain. The four-footed earth figure with a fiery tail may tell of a drought; the small creatures placed near a human foot, of a destructive increase of rabbits, rats or other rodents, and the black vulture nibbling at a *kan* should mean “abundant growing crops,” partly parched by the sun, while the signs forming the base, *ah*, of the opposite figure have the former application to manual labour and the tillage of the ground. The sign *cimi* in the upper right hand corner having a numeral with it, has reference probably to a date. The top right hand figure on the blue ground has the *chicchan* head previously noticed, on the robe the hieroglyphic sign *U* changed in the hieratic writing to *V*, below these marks is *ah*. The deduction is, the figure has specially reference to the employment of water for irrigation, the masculine sign to labour, and the horse-shoe mark to the cultivated land. The incense burner has this mark, it being placed before the sun and man figure combined with the serpent; this latter form is sat on, behind the ears is the sign *imix*—“plenty.” Thus a general idea of these ideographs is obtained, and something close to the sense of the written columns arrived at.

It is remarkable that the “*chicchan*” sign should be made use of as a symbolic head-dress for the Chan priest, and raises the question of whether it meant “the priests of irrigation,” the instructors in agricultural pursuits, or not.

Plate 22, in the upper section, seems to imply that a human sacrifice had been offered at the shrine or temple of the god to whom the *on* sign belonged, the emblem is displayed on the great inner doorway of the Copan temple. It is seed-time, indicated by a man—a labourer—one without a collar, being engaged in sowing. As to the collar-man previously noticed, the high priest or king having sworn to do all things beneficial for the land may have ceremoniously sown, as does the Emperor, the Son of Heaven, to this day at Peking, honouring the tiller of the ground by becoming his associate.



The human form suspended in mid-air with the head downwards is probably the sun, wanting, however, the limbs of the conventional figure; he descends to the sacrificial altar.

The second section, like the first, has an "olla," representing stored corn, and in each case the serpent or water-giving power is recognised in connection with these crops. The cornered figures are an enigma; the right appears by the bird of the sun head-dress to represent that deity. On the left there is a group composed of the slightly moistened earth, *imix, kan, yax*, being attached as signs.

Plate 23, page 78. The large signs may be a combination, there being no initial glyph. As to the comment by Dr. C. Thomas on the lower figures, "a hand is stretched out as if to catch the skull." The head of the serpent is alluded to, as the entire symbol in all its length occupies the centre.

The St. Andrew's cross is the symbol for rain. The seated figure on the left is, probably, the chief of the Chans; as to his ribs and thinness—these, with the cross on a black ground, seem to imply a time of scarcity of water. The opposite figure is that of Kukulcan, known by the mask, the cross sign, and the serpent's head above it. The blackened upper figure is a difficulty. The priests occasionally smeared their bodies with black; whether there is a metaphor in the adoption of this hue is a matter of surmise.



Varieties of the sign *Chicchan*. From the Sculptures.

The priest is a Chan, with a huge bunch of their emblems on his head; his employment is dibbling and sowing maize in the holes made, or seeing that it is done. The result seems pretty good; the "olla" or stone jar has three maize signs, to be read "plenty of corn."

The blue figure seated in mid-heaven surrounded by rays is a puzzle, but as the rays are of a significant number it may symbolize the sun. The professor's interpretation of "imix kan" as "bread of maize" is close to the truth—that is, seeing the word "bread" is not a native one, the signs may yet mean "fulness of bread," or "plenty of corn." Remarks have already been made on the derivation of the sign *imix*.

In the Paris edition of the Manuscript Troano, the priest wearing the *Chicchan* head-dress appears in Plate 4. The cross-hatched serpent is in the lower part of Plate 5. In Plate 7 the blue figures appear to be sun and serpent priests, distinguished by their head-gear. The unravelling of the fabulous history of the brown quadruped will require the united efforts of all students. Plate 25 has reference to an inundation; the blue serpent is the prominent figure. The three following plates have the water god and the serpent conspicuously placed, the latter blotched. The brown quadruped may eventually be classified as a land emblem, and the priests in blue and brown as the cultivators and irrigators of the land.\*

As to the four plates of the Dresden Codex in the Geographical and Geological Survey, page 67, the first is a fac-simile of Plate 25 of the manuscript. It, with those following, will be scanned in order to record points unnoticed in the paper issued under the superintendence of the department of the United States Government; with the view of accumulating the results of observation, in whatever manner they present themselves. The lower figure stands on the *Ahou* sign for a deity, marked with lines right and left, usually attaching to this sign of rank when employed for the sun. The nomenclature is confirmed by the head-gear of

\* Brasseur de Bourbourg: "Manuscript Troano." Paris, 1869.

the idol, the mask has a protruding tongue; the sacrificing priest is a Chan, running water is round his eye, he wears the water god mask with teeth. This adoration of each other is also seen on the slabs.

In the middle division a Chan priest adores a serpent; "ik," being the sign of Kukulcan, is on the idol's twisted form. The priests have a mantle fastened at the throat after the manner of those at Usumacinta. As to the upper figures, the idols in procession were carried on a brancard. Chavero states this and gives an illustration of it in his vol. I., page 611. Consequently, this carried figure of a masked priest seems not to fit in exactly with Landa's *Relacion de Cosas*, but rather to be of the nature of the mythical representations of priests, monsters and uncanny creatures wrestling in conflict, perhaps figurative of struggles against difficulties by the cultivators of the earth, as we cannot suppose it has anything to do with ethics.

These figurative representations resemble the carved panels on the lizard of Quirigua and the flat stela at Copan. Problems not yet solved.

Plate 26 differs little from the previous one. A Chan priest offers a bird and apparently honey, and a macaw to the serpent god—the pedestal is marked with one of his signs, and four at the apex is his number of dots; the base is the *Ahau* sign for "lord or god." The feathers of the bird's tail may denote the supplication of four deities.

The middle division is similar to Plate 25—the *ik* sign in both instances being identical with that of Peru; the priest presents a thankoffering for something indicated in the "olla," the "kan," and another indistinct sign which is the crop that has been received. To the upper division mythical figure there is no clue.

Plate 27 is not very distinct in outline, but the lower division has a Chan priest who offers a bird in sacrifice to the serpent.

Below is a fish resting on two "kan" signs, which presuming the signs mean catches—though crops when on the corn "olla"—allusion is made to the success of the fisheries. It



has been shown that at Copan, Stela C was raised to commemorate the ability of the Chan priests and the water god, the propagators of fish. The middle division has no special feature: a Chan priest with a receptacle containing fish adores the god of running waters or rivers—his sign with dots outside the loop is on the pedestal. Plate 28 is much of the same character.



Initial Glyph and  
Kukulcan's sign.  
From the Foliated  
Cross.

Chapter IV. contains many useful suggestions, and at some other time it may be possible to follow its reasoning, fully examine the manuscripts quoted, and endeavour to verify its conclusions.

As to Figure 21 of the chapter, it looks like a rattle, on its rim the water spots; the instrument was the commonest in use, is found among living Indian communities, and as a symbol was probably the rattlesnake. It has been mentioned elsewhere that a tribal word signified both the reptile and the hand-rattle; therefore a priest or astrologer having it would be a Chan. Figure 26 the serpent god; he has the rain cross, a serpent head-dress—six dots signify "much good." Figure 27 may be the parched earth. As to Figure 29, it has a reference to the *Muluc* sign and *mol*—the latter being said to signify "a group of things united or congregated one upon another"; and as to this rendering, it accords with our view of the sign *mol* on the altars of Copan.

There this sign follows the initial glyph when an altar was profusely decorated with the larger hieroglyphics. It was an abbreviation used for a limited space, followed by the hieroglyphic for an "aguada," making a dedication after this manner: "To the serpent god of fruitfulness, and all the idols," also to the Chans. The idols were represented by the sign *mol*, and the agricultural priests by the sign for "reservoirs." The serpent in this case stood out prominently. An equivalent to the short manner of including the rest is in the English Book of Common Prayer, where we find the expression "and all the royal family."

In the series of Reports, 1884-5, page 351, No. 17 has the mark for "masculine," and cannot be a female figure. Page 353 shows three Chan priests, masked, there being no "Ahau" sign attached, as in the case of the effigies of the idols. The priest to the left is engaged in spearing; the centre one is superintending the germinating seed, whose root strikes downwards; he on the right is dibbling with the stick ordinarily used. Page 357 gives three examples of the mask with a T eye and the "masculine" sign, which always in the hieratic seems to mean manual labour. Page 381, figure of a long-nosed personage, simply exhibits a figure of a Chan priest.

One word must be said with regard to the broad-lipped personages represented on the sculptured base of the terrace upon which the shrine of the Palenké cross stands.

It is not difficult to account for the peculiarity of visage noticeable, the land of this tribe being not far from the place where their sculptured figures were found. In fact, to employ a German expression, they were "landsmen," people of the same country. Belonging to a district to the northwards

they, appearing to be not captives but devotees, may have made a pilgrimage to the temple. At Aguascalientes and elsewhere in Mexico they may now be seen. They have large over-turned lips and much-distended nostrils, a swarthy complexion, the hair being black, lank, and straight as that of all the North-American Indian tribes.

These and other figures with this peculiar labial feature have been supposed to be individuals of an African extraction brought into the Maya country across the sea. This idea has given rise to the conjecture that there was inter-communication. Nothing is more improbable, as navigation in mid-ocean was unlikely by either the negroes or the aborigines of Central America, in the flat-bottomed craft of the early days of seamanship. We know that the best of the old navigators, the Phœnicians, Arabs, Chinese, Danes, Portuguese, Dutch, English, in succession, for the most part hugged the coast line. Their course was mainly made by following prominent landmarks, and they went backwards and forwards along a trade route before a steady monsoon.

The worship of the mastodon has received slight notice, as the idea rested only on a theory attached to the many unexplained elephants' trunks and the "sacred stone" fabulous creature. Quetzalcoatl as Kukulcan has been prominent, and the data brought together are confirmatory of the legends. The mound-builders, though omitted, have not been forgotten, and as the serpent was one of the objects they worshipped it is reasonable to include them in the number of those who were of the universal religion. *Ixazal-Uoh* has already been referred to, and is by Brasseur stated to have been regarded by the Mayas as the traditional spouse of *Kinch-Ahau*, which confirms the elevation of the Chan priests, who possessed the



Possibly an effigy of *Kukulcan*. Also six caste marks.  
From the tablet of the Foliated Cross.

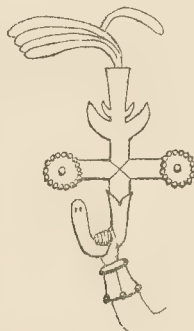


books treating of agriculture and irrigation, to a rank equal to that of the five principal deities. Kinch-Abau, like other combinations, comprised the united forces of nature.

There are numerous valleys on the Peruvian coast, and in these were a race of people who had made considerable advances in civilization. The most considerable were the Chimú, who ruled over the valley where the city of Truxillo now stands; their system of irrigation was most efficient, and they had made considerable advances in the arts. They either came from the north, or they arrived from beyond the seas, but no opinion can be formed on the former possibility without a comparison with the languages of the northern tribes. There remains the other suggestion that they arrived from across the Pacific Ocean; and the Indians of Lambayeque gave a full account to the Spanish conquerors of the arrival of their ancestors in a large fleet, with a green stone idol.\* The conventional form of a jade stone idol, common in New Zealand, has in its nasal feature a resemblance to the nose of the Maya water god; and, moreover, jadite is the sacred ornamental stone of the Mayas and the Aztecs. A mingling of the tribes after the Inca conquest might have brought the peculiarities of each into unison, and a migration of the Chimú transferred them to Central America.

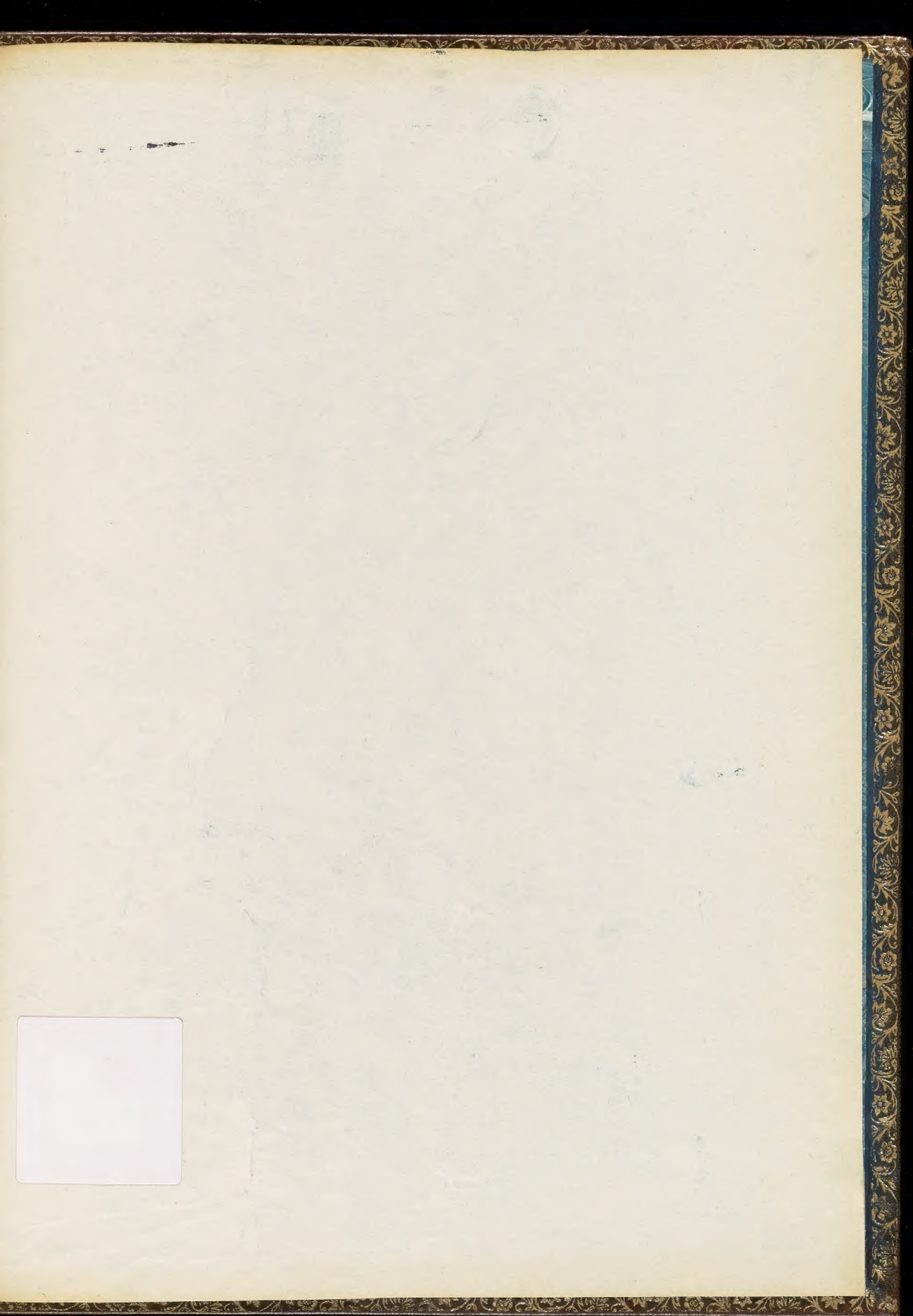
The intention with which this monograph began was to show the union of certain Maya gods and the influence of "the Five." The attempt to demonstrate that their position was superior to that of any others has been supported by proofs gathered by the way, and it will be interesting to know how far the critics accept these proofs as sufficient evidence of their being of one group, that their emblems are on the temples and that they were the primary elements of the ancient religion of the country of the "sacred stone."

The inquiry has been superficially carried over a wide tract, leading to the formation of a decided opinion as to the almost universal acceptance of one religion throughout both North and South America, and that the creeds were aboriginal. It is hoped research will be prosecuted regarding the place of the origin of this nature worship, so that a decision may be come to as to whether it was introduced from Peru into Central America, or had taken exactly the opposite course.



The Five Maya Symbols, from Chichen Itza.

\* C. R. Markham: "Geographical Proceedings," Vol. XV. "Royal Geographical Journal," Vol. XLI.











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